Jack Miner On Current Topics

By JACK MINER

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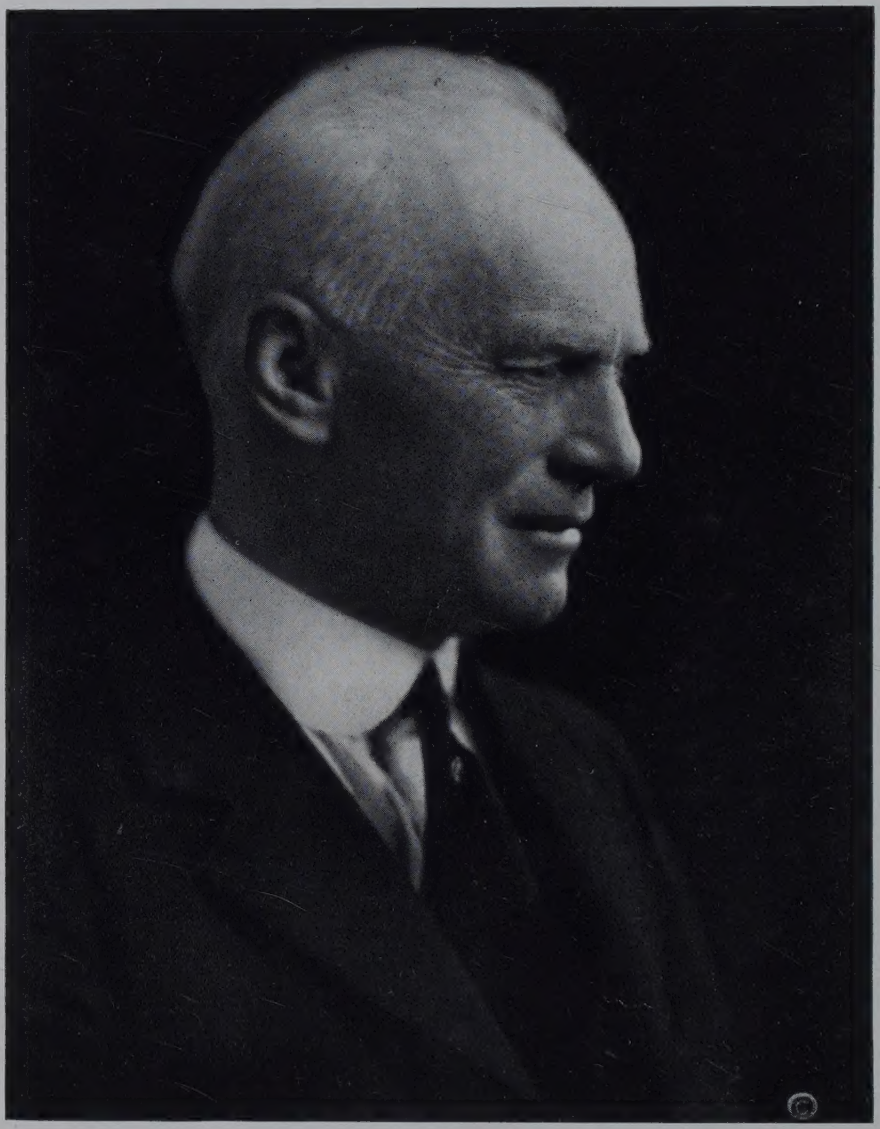
JACK MINER
on Current Topic

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JACK MINER
ON CURRENT TOPICS



JACK MINER

Photo by his friend
Frank Scott Clark

Jack Miner On Current Topics

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By

JACK MINER



THE RYERSON PRESS
TORONTO



"Birds and animals are only wild," says Jack Miner, "because they have to be."

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NOTE—With one or two exceptions the photographs used for the illustrations on the pages following were taken by Dr. R. D. Sloane, of Leamington, Ont.

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INTRODUCTION

SINCE the publication of Jack Miner's first book, "Jack Miner and the Birds," in 1923, there has been an enormous amount of interest in the work the noted Canadian naturalist has been doing and in the experiments he has been carrying on at his bird paradise at Kingsville, Ontario. This interest has been increased by the exceedingly wide sale of the first book in the United States as well as in Canada, and also by "Uncle Jack's" lectures in hundreds of centres all over the continent.

While Mr. Miner is naturally a busy man, working with the birds in the migration periods of spring and fall, travelling widely for his lectures, speaking at Chautauquas and summer camps, he does find time once in a while to do some writing in his own inimitable way. Some of this has been worked out in magazine articles, some other items in letters to newspapers, other bits of it in letters to personal friends, and again in random notes on subjects he was interested in. Of course, "Uncle Jack" has never been prolific in his writing and when one knows the absolute downright wholeheartedness with which he turns out one of these magazine articles or letters, and how hard it is to bring himself to do so, his literary product must be all the more appreciated.

With a call from the general public for another book, it seemed advisable to gather these articles and letters together, and they are in consequence offered in this book. The title, "Jack Miner on Current Topics," describes them aptly, since they are written around themes covering

matters in which almost every one of us is or should be interested.

A feature of the first Miner book was the pictures taken at the Miner home near Kingsville. The same feature pertains to this second volume, though the pictures in this are mostly a stage further advanced than those in the previous book and show the results of Jack Miner's work in the several years intervening.

Just how some of the articles included in the content of this book are appreciated may be judged from the letter below regarding one of them, written to Jack Miner's son, Manly, by Mr. Henry B. Joy, one of the best-known of Detroit's motor magnates. As the letter will evidence, Mr. Joy has been following in a humble way in Jack Miner's footsteps. The pleasure he has gotten from the results is surely very well worth while.—E.J.M.

GROSSE POINTE FARMS, MICH.,
February 3rd, 1927.

MANLY F. MINER, ESQ.,
Kingsville, Ontario,
Canada.

My dear Manly:

I have your article by your father, Jack Miner, entitled "The Unfinished Treaty." I never read anything with greater interest!

I endorse every word he says and I sincerely hope and trust that the basic principle of bird conservation which he advocates may find a warm reception among all the people of Canada and America. I hope ways may be found to get that article into the hands of conservationists everywhere and all others not now specially interested, because it will make bird conservationists of them all!

If only the State and the county authorities everywhere would adopt Jack Miner's suggestion for a small bird

conservation area in the middle of each county and larger sanctuaries where they might be wisely located on a larger scale, under state support, such sanctuaries could be accomplished, as I have proof in my small way, near Mount Clemens, on the shores of Lake St. Clair, and all the people everywhere would be grateful for ever to Jack Miner for his missionary work in the cause of bird conservation!

Nothing has ever given me more pleasure in my life than, by following Jack Miner's advice, to find my little pondhole, one hundred and fifty feet away from the front window of my house, filled with fluttering wild geese and ducks coming and going in the confidence of perfect safety.

With kindest regards and best wishes to all the Miners, I remain,

Very sincerely yours,

HENRY B. JOY.

Jack Miner on Current Topics

THE UNFINISHED MIGRATORY BIRD TREATY

POSSIBLY one of the greatest steps ever taken towards the protection of the birds of North America was the forming of the Migratory Bird Treaty between Miss Canada and Uncle Sam. But, when that treaty permitted any province or state a three and one-half months' open season, I am sure all thinking conservationists will agree with me that it is unfinished. Now, dear reader, I feel fully qualified and justified to have a heart-to-heart talk with all classes on the above important subject.

As I was born in the dear old State of Ohio, the very name Ohio sounds sacred to me, for I dearly love the land of my birth. At the age of thirteen I was brought over the line and was liberated here in Canada where I chopped out existence and have grown up with the country. In other words, I was born in Ohio and made in Canada. Therefore, every ounce of me and every breath I draw is North American, and God forbid that I should say one word that would cause even a thought of friction between the people of these two countries that are so near and dear to my heart. My only purpose of writing this article is to create a deeper consideration among the shooters.

Now, without the vast breeding grounds of Canada for our ducks and geese or without their winter home in the Southern States, all thinking humanity knows these beauti-

ful birds would soon follow the passenger pigeon and become extinct.

Therefore, it is compulsory that we must work heart and hand together. But, don't let us use that word "compulsory." Let us say, lovingly together. Yes, for God's sake and for the sake of the rising and unborn generations, let us work lovingly together. Now, do you know, dear brother Yankee, that you have as many shooters as we have



A view from the Observation Tower at the Miner Home showing birds rising from the North Ponds.

population? Have you ever stopped to consider the vastness of the Dominion of Canada and that we have less than nine million people? Do you know that the Province of Ontario alone is more than eleven times larger than the State of Ohio, with less than one-half the population? Ontario borders New York State to the east, and, coming west, it borders Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota, yet Ontario is only one out of our nine vast provinces, saying nothing about the hundreds of thousands,

yes, I might say a million or more square miles of unsurveyed territory still farther north. This fact will surely give you a glimpse of the vastness of our breeding grounds for the waterfowl that are forced to congregate by countless thousands in your warmer states during the winter months.

Just recently one of my highly esteemed Yankee friends and I were discussing this migratory bird question. When I told him that, taking North America as a whole, wild geese



Liberating a Honker after it has been "Tagged." Note the corncobs on the ground.

were fast decreasing, he looked me in the face and said, "Jack, who has been talking to you along this line?" Now, I don't know as I took it as a compliment, for it sounded as though I had no knowledge of what I was saying and was easily influenced. You will note that in the beginning of this article I said I felt justified and qualified to express my views. I feel justified because of my birthright and qualified by personal knowledge and experience. It is now nearly twenty years since I first started catching and

tagging wild ducks, and I have hundreds of personal letters written by the same hands that shot these ducks, giving me full particulars as to when it all happened, and in the majority of cases the tags are returned to me as positive proof. By the way, just yesterday a duck tag was returned from the North-west Territories, Canada, which must be in the neighborhood of three thousand miles from my home where it was tagged.

Since 1915 I have caught, tagged and liberated over fifteen hundred wild geese and, as far as I know, I am the



Aluminum Leg Bands for "Tagging" the Birds.

only man on earth that is catching and tagging wild geese for educational purposes. I have their tags returned from many states to the south of me—as high as seventy-eight from one state—and clear into the Arctic Circle to the north, where they are killed by the Eskimos, who take the tags to the Hudson Bay fur trading agents for an interpretation. In addition to my post-office address, this agent notices that I have also stamped a select verse of Scripture on the tag and in several cases these agents have directed the Eskimos to the missionaries for a further explanation.

Therefore, I don't hesitate to say that I have the most accurate and the most fascinating bird tagging system of

any man or combination of men standing on our lovely North American continent. Isn't this tagging system with my full address better than just a number on a tag, especially in the Arctic Circle? So you see, I don't have to refer to almanac history to find out where our ducks and geese are being killed.

In addition to the above facts, let me say I have been privileged to cross our continent four times during the last



"Uncle Jack" Making the Leg Bands.

three years, on one occasion going to Alaska, and the last three Octobers have found me lecturing in our prairie provinces, the greatest wheat field in America. During that time I visited over one hundred cities, towns and villages, often motoring over fifty miles a day across the prairies. When travelling by rail, I always ride in observation coaches and try to keep both eyes open, for, like Zaky of old, I want to see for myself. And will you believe me, I didn't see one thousand wild geese on these three trips, October,

1923, October, 1924, and October, 1925, and the most I heard of any hunting party killing was fourteen. But every place I lectured persons were asking. "What has become of our wild geese that used to come here by the tens of thousands? Where are they? Have they changed their migrating route or what has happened to them?" I answered them by saying, "Automatic guns and systematic shooting is where they are migrating to."



Ty Cobb and Uncle Jack with a pair of newly-tagged honkers.

Why do I answer this way? Because of the number of letters I receive enquiring for wild geese to use as decoys. One letter reads: "Send us some good callers and price is an after consideration." Other letters read: "So many geese came into decoys and we killed them all. Among them was this one with a tag on." Another letter reads: "We killed thirty-seven this morning." Some of these letters are accompanied by snapshots showing a car literally covered with geese. Snapshots don't lie.

I also receive letters from persons living along the Missis-

sippi River, enquiring: "What has become of the sandhill crane—a large bird that stood nearly five feet high? They used to come here by the hundreds, but we don't see them any more." Yes, what has become of the sandhill crane, brother sportsmen of North America? Wake up, or in less than twenty-five years the same question will be asked about our wild geese.

Some time ago I received through the mail a booklet



There they go! The same wild geese just released.

entitled, "Federal Power and Duck Bag Limit Facts," A Study Bulletin, No. 6, issued by the National Association of Audubon Societies, 1974 Broadway, New York City. Now, I am proud to say that I am a member of this society, yet I am disgustingly surprised to think that such a highly respected association as our Audubon Society would issue a bulletin that has a tone of upholding federal laws privileging any individual to shoot over two thousand ducks and eight hundred wild geese in one year.

The writer of this bulletin apparently wants us to believe

that it is based on careful study and broad views. I heartily agree with the careful study part, but not the broad views. For, on page three, the writer of the bulletin says: "Ducks are not natives of any one state, but to the whole United States." In reply to this selfish statement, let me say that over eighty per cent, of the ducks and geese of North America are hatched in Canada and are full grown and ready to shoot before they leave here. Therefore, they are



Jack Miner spends $5,000 to $6,000 yearly in Feeding Birds. This shows how the corn is distributed.

natives of Canada and the United States and belong to both countries. Yet the writer of the bulletin only briefly mentions Canada. That is on page eight, where he says: "In Canada, however, killing has been restricted as much as in the United States. The result, the number of fowls have so increased since 1913 as to astonish the country." That is another misleading and untrue statement, for ducks and geese are not increasing in Canada, and the average duck hunter of Ontario doesn't kill twenty-five ducks a

year, and not one out of five gets a wild goose. Now, in reply to that statement that Canada has also restricted killing, let me ask the Audubon Society this question: Is a state or a province that permits each shooter a lawful right to kill twenty-five ducks and eight wild geese a day for one hundred days in a season restricting the killing?

Now I am convinced that a bag limit as a law is a failure, as it seldom can be enforced. Its principle motive and



Wild Geese in the Miner Trap. These will be tagged and released.

advantages are to educate the people that slaughter is unsportsmanlike, but what kind of education is this—a lawful privilege for any individual to shoot twenty-five hundred ducks and eight hundred geese in one season? What will our children's children think when they search our records and find that grandfather could lawfully shoot six tons of ducks and geese in one year? I say to all classes of humanity, a law like that is worse than no law at all. Yes, we all know that no sportsman will kill that amount of

game in one year. Then, why in the name of common sense do we leave that lawful privilege open to those who will?

In the following I reproduce from the Audubon booklet referred to—"Federal Power and Duck Bag Limits"—A Study—Bulletin No. 6—sent out by National Association of Audubon Societies at 1974 Broadway, New York City, where they uphold such bag limits as you can see—some states as high as twenty-five hundred ducks per man per season, which I say is worse than no law at all. Why make mention of limit when it is so high? This is what I say is worse than no law at all; allowing a man to lawfully kill 2,500 ducks per year. They belong to no one state; so why shouldn't it be uniform?

State	State Bag Limits Seasonal	State	State Bag Limits Seasonal
Alabama	1,950	Nevada	735
Alaska	2,120	New Hampshire	1,840
Arizona	2,160	New Jersey	2,300
Arkansas	1,950	New Mexico	2,675
Arkansas County	1,170	New York	2,275
California	800	Long Island	2,300
Colorado	2,675	North Carolina	1,950
Connecticut	2,300	Currituck Sound	1,300
Delaware	1,840	North Dakota	990
Florida	300	Ohio	2,300
Georgia	1,950	Oklahoma	100
Idaho	1,284	Oregon	480
Illinois	1,605	Pennsylvania	60
Indiana	1,380	Rhode Island	2,675
Iowa	1,380	South Carolina	1,950
Kansas	1,380	South Dakota	1,380
Kentucky	2,300	Tennessee	1,170
Louisiana	300	Reelfoot Lake	1,560
Maine	920	Texas (North Zone)	2,700
Maryland	1,950	Texas (South Zone)	2,300
Susquehanna Flats	975	Utah	2,300
Massachusetts	2,300	14 Counties	2,675
Michigan	765	Vermont	1,840
Minnesota	120	Virginia	350
Mississippi	1,560	Washington	320
Missouri	1,380	West Virginia	1,000
Montana	1,820	Wisconsin	1,440
Nebraska	2,300	Wyoming	1,395

It is now thirty-eight years since our Ontario government wisely prohibited the shooting of ducks in the spring of the year, so you see the Migratory Bird Treaty wasn't hard for us to adjust ourselves to, and to-day our bag limit is twenty-five ducks per day for eight days, two hundred per season, and right here, let me kindly ask, how can any man be considerate of the other fellow's North American rights and privileges and want to shoot more than two hundred



Something Frightened These Birds.

ducks per year? If in one state ducks are so scarce that the game protective officials see fit to allow a shooter only one hundred per season, why should a bordering state, where the ducks congregate by the countless thousands for only the winter months, allow their shooters a privilege of slaughtering twenty-five hundred in the same period of time?

"Am I my brother's keeper?" How we all like to claim the honor of being one hundred per cent. North American. But remember, no man is entitled to this blessed heritage

unless he first considers and tries to practise the Golden Rule.

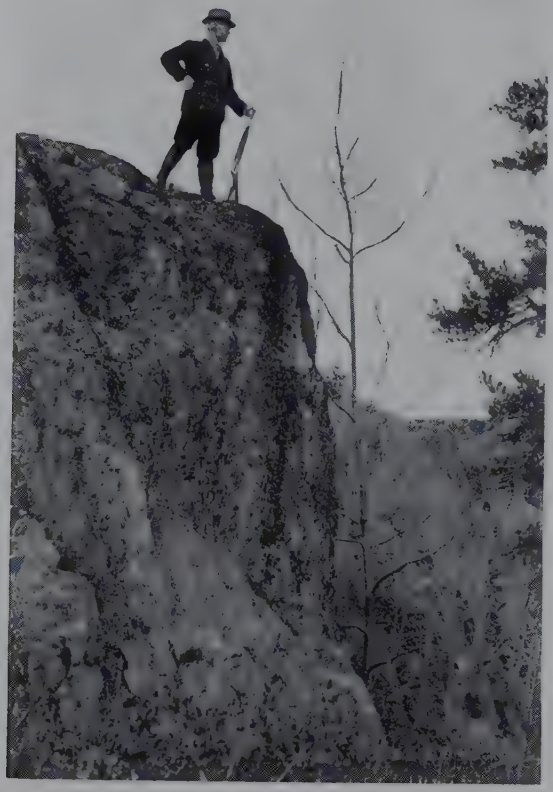
Yes, we know that when these ducks are forced to pile up for four months in their winter quarters they cannot be estimated by thousands but by millions—millions of ducks on thousands of acres. But, when they are scattered over the northern states and Canada, it is hundred of ducks on millions of square miles. Five hundred house flies in a little six inch balloon fly-trap make it black with flies and, if we are short-sighted enough, we will think flies are increasing by leaps and bounds. But, liberate them in a big barn and you will find them few and far between.

Another trigger-finger excuse advanced by the thoughtless shooter is that the southern marsh lands are drained and the ducks' food supply is destroyed. Is it all true? Forty-five years ago, I am absolutely sure, there were five ducks migrating through Ontario where there is one to-day. In other words, they have decreased eighty per cent. the last half-century and at that time artificial feeding was not even thought of. Is eighty per cent. of their original natural feeding grounds destroyed? I cannot believe so. Who hasn't been duck hunting the last ten years and seen thousands of acres of green marsh with more guns than ducks?

I have had some of my friends write me and fully agree that ducks have decreased fully eighty per cent. in the last forty-five years, yet they go on to say ducks are not decreasing. All I wish to kindly ask these friends is—if they agree ducks have decreased eighty per cent. when did they decrease? I say they have gradually decreased as the hunters and guns have increased.

Now, I am not complaining for the sake of doing so, nor have I any personal motive in view. No one is paying me to do so or even suggested or even knows I am writing this.

Moreover, there are no government strings attached to me. But I want to cheerfully devote the balance of my life to conservation, and I have some carefully thought-out and a few tested-out plans of improvement to offer.



"Uncle Jack" in Northern Ontario on One of His Annual Hunting Trips.

But before I go further, I want to apologize for my lack of scholarship, for neglected red hair, freckles and the fragrance of a young skunk catcher, and mother necessity all combined their forces and kicked me out of school. The

result is I was educated for ditching, splitting rails and market hunting, but through not being able to read until after I was a gray-haired man, I was compelled to go to the forest, field and marshes and let these so-called wild creatures teach me their ways and it was they that melted the heart that controlled my trigger finger and caused me to stop and think. And while I don't want the readers to take me to be one of those old religious cranks that wouldn't boil a tea kettle on Sunday, yet I do want you to know that every one of His lovable promises I have been able to test out I have found it to be true and, in connection with this article, I want to quote the following three discoveries:

First. If man will take God at His word in harmony with Him, that man can change the migrating route of the fowls of the air. Second. Any bird that is intelligent enough to fly one-half mile from humanity for self-preservation, will fly clear across the continent back and forth to us for food and protection. Third. Civilization does not necessarily prevent us from having them and they can be taught to know our voice and will come down out of the air when we call and, with a little patience on our part, they will actually eat from our hands. "Let man have dominion over all."

Knowing these facts, we must no longer treat these birds as wild, but as migratory chickens, and let each county establish a small Federal sanctuary of not less than twenty-five nor more than one hundred acres near the centre of the county. This should have a dog-proof fence around it and no shooting allowed within a mile of this fence. I just mention the above as an outline, but local conditions are, after all, the determining factor and, if you have no local conditions, do as I did—make them. Plant a forest border

of evergreens from four to ten rods wide all around the outside. Now erect a small observation tower beside the public highway, but just outside the sanctuary fence, where all classes can go up with field glasses and kodak and enjoy the sights. But remember, the public must be kept outside of this fence. Now liberate a few pairs of wing-tipped pinioned wild ducks and geese in there, and feed and protect this haven of rest and watch results. In a few years you will find your sanctuary a stopping place for thousands of our migratory chickens, with many other species making their home in the evergreens.

In seedling trees I planted twelve years ago, there were at least three hundred occupied by mourning doves' nests at one time last summer. The overflow of such sanctuaries will spread all over the country and soon our bird life will be more evenly distributed throughout the nation. Brother shooter and bird lover, the plan is not a joke. It has been tested out and the opportunity is pounding at the door of every county. We can bring these honking V-shaped waving lines of birds down into our little lakes, rivers or even in artificial mud holes and have them with us for at least two months twice a year, or we can let them continue to migrate over a mile high. This is left entirely with us.

Now, ten years ago our beautiful white whistling swans were reduced to hundreds and were in danger of becoming extinct. The result is that in ten years they are estimated to be over twenty thousand and I have reason to believe this estimate.

Four years ago I visited Niagara Falls and found it was true that these swans were being caught in this death trap by the hundreds. Niagara river for ten or fifteen miles above the falls is the first open water in Lake Erie. Thus, the swans went there first on their northern migration,

put their heads under their wings and went to sleep for the night and gradually drifted into the swift water which carried them over the falls where seventy-five per cent. or more were killed and drowned in this one hundred and sixty foot drop. The balance crawled up on the ice bridge below, unable to rise straight up and there they awaited their doom.

I got in conversation with Mr. William Hill, better known as Red Hill, the river man. We sat down and discussed the



Wild Whistling Swans resting on Lake Erie, in front of the Miner Sanctuary.

situation. Finally he looked me in the face and said: "There used to be quite a lot of wild geese get killed here, but I haven't seen a wild goose around here since you harbored them up at the west end of the lake." At this I rose up and whacked him on the shoulder with my right hand and said: "Red, you have told me something. If the wild geese can be taken away from here, the swans can." And, last April, Mr. Henry Ford and I stood on the north bank of beautiful Lake Erie, just three miles south of my home, and twenty-six miles south-east of Detroit, and there, about one-half mile out was the sandbar, fully one mile in length,

literally covered with wild geese. A little closer in were thousands upon thousands of canvas-back ducks and there right near the shore, in the calmest of the water, by actual count, were over three thousand of these beautiful white angelic birds—our whistling swans. Some had their necks curved and their heads lying on their backs resting, others were tipping up, leaving their black feet out of the water. They were feeding. Some were hovering and making love



A most unusual photograph. We know of no other Whistling Swans in captivity. And these birds are happy.

to their sweethearts. Their cooing could be heard for miles inland. Mr. Ford pushed his hand through his hair and, turning to me, he said, "Jack, I never saw a more beautiful sight in all my life."

Don't forget, brother bird lover and shooter, we are now overlooking a hunting ground where I hunted for thirty years of my blood-thirsty life and never shot a wild goose or ever saw a swan on the water. The swans coming to our country have multiplied the public interest in bird life

fully tenfold. The little town of Kingsville, with two thousand population, boasts of having fifteen thousand people there in one day to see the birds and, let me again say, to any county bird society, the opportunity to duplicate what I have described is rapping at your door. But now, the latest report I get is—the swans are eating the duck food in a southern state and we are going to shoot the swans. How can such a report be true?

Now the first flag I ever knew was the Stars and Stripes and I was taught to believe that each of those forty-eight stars represented a state. Then, when I got to Canada, I was told that our Dominion was larger than all of these forty-eight states combined. Such being the case, we have the equivalent of one hundred states or more in the United States and Canada and these swans belong to all of us and, just because they are eating a small portion of the duck food in one small state, should the other ninety-nine per cent. be deprived of seeing them alive? I say, "No—No—No—let's feed them." Why do I say this? Because of personal knowledge and experience.

A few years ago the elk in Wyoming were starving. The Izaak Walton League of America, of which I am proud to be a member, sounded the alarm and big-hearted Yankees rallied to the cause and saved the situation. Now, if you can give thousands of dollars to save the elk for a few thousand people to go and shoot, surely to goodness you can give a few hundred to save the various water-fowl for millions of people to see alive and thousands of people to shoot.

Oh, I would to God that all of us had more of that dear old Abraham Lincoln spirit, when he stood up and said: "I stand for what is best for the most people." As a further illustration I refer you to my own twenty-five acre

mud hole experience where there is absolutely no natural food at all. If one man, with no natural advantage and no money (the biggest bank account I ever had was an overdrawn one), can do what you are compelled to believe has been done here, what might the organized effort of one hundred and twenty-five million people accomplish. Dear North American people, from sunny south to the North Pole, this all depends on the desire of our hearts, for as soon as I allowed my heart to love the birds, it stayed my bloody hands. My trigger-finger relaxed. I soon had the birds coming to me, but it was not until 1908 that I got the first eleven wild geese to come down.

I started planting trees in 1910 and to-day I am one of the richest men on earth because there isn't money enough in the world to buy my home and compel me, in my sixties, to leave this sacred spot and go somewhere else and re-establish. In the spring of 1926 I fed over four thousand bushels of corn to our migratory water-fowl that had been educated to come to my home. I am thankful to say our Canadian governments are helping me a little, and some big-hearted Yankees give me good donations, which are very acceptable. In fact, I wouldn't be able to carry on this work to the extent I have had it not been for their help, because it now costs me nearly $6,000 per year to feed the birds which stop at the sanctuary on both spring and fall migration trips. The balance of this expense is derived from my lectures.

Now let me offer a few suggestions. Let us call and call and call until every hunter and bird lover in America is aroused and let us have the biggest international meeting of sportsmen and bird lovers that ever got together on this continent and let us get close together, so we can talk low and avoid friction. Let us go prepared to talk kindly and

plainly and to listen to plain talk. Let us put on the soft pedal and point out to the shooter that the fall of one bird out of the air from his deadly aim can give pleasure to one only, while thousands are deprived of seeing it alive and that less than ten per cent. of the people of North America want to shoot with a gun. The other ninety per cent. want to see the birds alive. The ninety per cent. take nothing



A most unusual picture—the Nest of a Canada Goose. Note the goose on the nest. Photo taken in Wainwright, Alberta, National Park.

from the shooter, but keep building up his opportunities. On the other hand, we want the bird lover to be reasonable. We cannot say that the ducks and geese are of any particular value, only to see them lined up in the air and here and there cheerfully honking and quacking and the mellow hovering of their wings or as a table fowl and a cushion for our sleepy heads.

Ducks and geese multiply very rapidly, and what

reasonable man can be opposed to shooting a limited number any more than taking the surplus of our domestic fowl? Remember, the passenger pigeon became so extremely abundant that in 1878 they developed a contagious disease and 99.9 per cent. of them disappeared in ten years and have long since been extinct. The desire to go shooting takes hundreds of thousands of men away from the grind



A Close-Up of the Same Nest.

of life, gives them an appetite to eat and a desire to sleep and they wake up rested and are better husbands and fathers in their homes. Such being a positive fact, what reasonable man can oppose it? But we must curtail that federal open season of three and one-half months and either have a uniform smaller federal-controlled bag limit or none at all. Yes, I said federal-controlled bag limit, because the migratory birds are federal property since they know neither state nor international boundary lines.

Therefore, federal property can only rightly and justly be controlled by federal laws.

One of the complaints I have heard is that the ducks' breeding-grounds are destroyed. Such nonsense! There are breeding-grounds in America for many times the number of ducks that we have. The only reasonable complaint for us not having ten ducks where we now have one is hinged on their winter quarters. We can overcome all of this by feeding. In this way we can move them from all polluted streams and stagnant lakes, which at the present time are killing our ducks by the hundreds of thousands. Feed them in marshes and lakes where the water is pure. Any person that knows the letter A about birds knows this is true. We feed to bring them to our guns; then why not feed to protect them? Oh, but you sigh and say, what an extravagant suggestion. But if our hearts are with the game it isn't. Remember, good sensible bird protection pays over two hundred per cent. dividends. We paid two million dollars to see a prize fight. Scatter the price of that half-hour's punishment over two years, with the addition of the natural feeds we could grow, and see how many ducks it will feed. Or, take one per cent. of our automobile expense. We all know that, if necessary, we could impose a gun license of one dollar. In fact, I am sure, if put to a vote, fully seventy-five per cent. of the sportsmen of America would vote for such a license.

Let me again say, the whole proposition rests upon the desire of our hearts, and every thinking person in America knows that the day is past for having something for nothing. Remember, the birds know no boundary lines, so don't let us conservationists know any in affording them food and protection.

Now, just another word re the three and one-half months'

open season. I say, No, it is six months, as it starts in Ontario, September 1st, and ends in the Southern States six months later. Another point I want all to take into consideration: Why do we want three and one-half months' open season on the migratory birds in each country when we only allow fifteen days on those that winter with us, such as quail, pheasants and other non-migratory birds? It is pure unadulterated selfishness; that is why. We are afraid the other fellow is going to get them. We should all be old enough to know that selfishness will not protect our birds, reforest our waste lands, nor erect educational buildings for the unborn generations. Selfishness will not take us any place where we would care to stay. Surely selfishness will not take us in the direction Jesus Christ went.

I don't care what line we take up, its success and enjoyment will depend upon the amount of real heart love, enthusiasm and education we put into it. Yes, love and education are the hope of the world. Bayonet-point compulsion is a total failure and will leave a crimson wake of revenge that will smolder for a century. And education does not end with the human race. Every one of our so-called wild creatures I have studied, from the chickadee to the lordly moose with the five-foot spread of antlers, all expose how they educate each other for self-preservation. Wild geese have often been known to nest in trees where foxes and prairie wolves are patrolling the ground. Crows never wintered in Ontario, Canada, thirty years ago, but as soon as the corn-binder came in and knocked off five per cent. of the ears, these black, nest-robbing murderers found, when they could get plenty of corn to live on, they could stand the winter and they educated others to stay, and now they winter here by hundreds of thousands, and I

know that our wild geese can be educated to winter in every state where the thermometer doesn't go over twenty below zero.

In 1924 fully five hundred wintered here and they would stay with me every winter only for being disturbed by my catching them. Wintering them here and in the northern states would relieve the south from having so many to feed. Moreover, as I said before, it would dis-



Shelter in the Time of Storm—Wild Geese on the Miner South Pond.

tribute them more evenly throughout the nation and, as caring for them brings one so much more enjoyment than shooting them does, it is easy to see how this plan works out. For illustration, in 1922, I let Mr. Henry B. Joy, of Detroit, have seven of my domesticated, hand-raised, wing-tipped, wild goslings which I raised, and he started a sanctuary on the north shore of Lake St. Clair, about thirty-five miles, as the goose flies, north-east from my home. He got geese coming the first year and last year

he fed over a thousand bushels of corn, and now he is so enthused over his success he has added a fifty-thousand-dollar addition to his Joy Ranch, as he calls it, and just leave it to Henry whether the ducks, geese and swans that visit this Lake St. Clair sanctuary will be fed, for he is able and will feed all the birds in North America if they stop there.

Mr. Joy is only one of the many I could name that have visited here and have gone home, copied and improved on my plan. There is Mr. Henry M. Wallace, of Detroit, who came here about 1920 and to-day has one of the most promising sanctuaries in the State of Michigan. Also Mr. W. K. Kellogg, of Battle Creek.

Who reaps the benefit of such controllable sanctuaries? As I have already stated, the sanctuary does not take anything from the shooter, but constantly increases his chances.

Now, if you will please allow me, I want to pour my heart out to all Canadians. Remember, I am a Canadian and, as I said before, my home isn't for sale at any price, for I love the people of Canada, especially the Canadian-born, and I love our fertile fields of the south, the rolling hills and pathless woods of the north, the home of such a variety and abundance of big game and fur-bearing animals, and our thousands of deep, inland lakes, teeming with the choicest of fish, and the sparkling streams where the speckled beauties are leaping the rapids every day and, as I have been privileged to camp out in our Northern Canada on hunting trips for forty-one Falls in succession, I feel qualified to say we are territory-poor but millionaires in our outdoor privileges and future prospects.

But such a large percentage of Canadians, after visiting my home and taking in the situation, look at me as if I

wasn't all there and very often remark: "Jack, you are only feeding and protecting these birds for the Eskimos and Yankees to shoot." This statement has been repeated so much I have got so it doesn't annoy me in the least, for I feel it comes from the lack of knowledge and consideration. Do you know, brother Canadian, the Eskimo is our Northern Canadian? He was here long before you and I were thought of and to-day we Canadians are sending thousands



Wild Geese will stay in the North through the Winter, if food is available. This photo taken at the Miner North Ponds, January 1st, 1927.

of dollars to foreign fields to civilize, educate and assist the needy, and I am in favor of it. But when I fatten a flock of wild geese and harness them up with a gospel message and let them go over the top for thousands of miles where it's so cold, I am told, they have to use two thermometers to register the weather and where the inhabitants have been living in snow houses and exist on icicles and snowballs for at least six or eight months in the year, I feel I have assisted them in securing meat for the body and bread for the

soul and have upheld my slogan, "Do the Duty closest to me."

Now, as for me feeding the birds for the Yankees to shoot, just let me unroll this fact. Nearly seventy per cent. of the money it costs me to feed these birds comes from the United States; it does not come from those who want to shoot the ducks. It is given me for lecturing in schools, churches, before bird-protective societies and in good donations. These Yankees are the biggest-hearted people you ever mixed with and we Canadians have the best neighbors of any country in the world. Oh, I would to God that our Canadian, Sir George Foster, whom we are all so proud of, for his activities in the Peace Conference, could bring the members of the League of Nations to North America and show them our four thousand miles of international boundary line that has stood the test for over a century without a firecracker of defence on either side. Surely our Atlantic-to-Pacific demonstration should convince the world that "Peace on earth, good will toward men," can control and that the blood-stained, devastated battle-field, which turns mother's hair white with sadness, droops her shoulders and breaks her loving heart, is absolutely unnecessary.

Now just a word to you Yankees that often say to me, "It is no use of us trying to protect the geese and ducks while the Eskimos are robbing their nests and slaughtering their young and molting birds and feeding them to their dogs." I will admit that there must be Eskimos of this kind, for there are undoubtedly outlaw Eskimos the same as we have outlaws further south. But, I am sure, the great, great majority are not that way. I am in constant communication with the fur traders of that country, especially the Hudson's Bay agents, and, while it is true I have more

goose tags returned from Hudson Bay than I have from any two states in the Union, yet it must be understood these Eskimos shoot to sustain life. Yet, I doubt very much if the average twenty Eskimos, with their bows and arrows, kill as many geese in a season as the bag limit allows one man in some of our states and provinces.

The Rev. W. G. Walton, Anglican missionary, who has been a missionary on the east side of Hudson Bay for thirty-five years, has visited my home three times, and I would that every man that complains about the Eskimos could hear this reverend gentleman tell the story of the starving conditions these natives often experience and how he has actually known cases of cannibalism to take place. And, right here, I want to reproduce the last letter received from this reverend gentleman, which speaks for itself. This territory he speaks of is the nesting-grounds of about all the Canada geese which winter east of the Mississippi; that has been proven by my tagging system. By the way, I am sure it will interest the readers to know that the geese that winter east of the Mississippi River never go west of the Rocky Mountains. The same may be said of the ducks, although they wander farther west than the geese. Yet the farthest west I have ducks reported is Montana and Alberta. The following is Rev. W. G. Walton's last letter to me from Hudson Bay territory:

"My dear Jack:

"Yours of the 15th inst. has just reached me and in reply re the census in the territory east of James and Hudson Bay. We had 797 Eskimos and about 1,000 Indians when I took the last census. Last winter about one-third of the Belcher Island Eskimos died through sickness and many along the coast from Great Whale River north and, in the recent summer, when my last letters were being

written, some deaths among the Indians were taking place through a cold that was laying the people up. Some thought it might be the 'flu.'

"I took the census in 1911 and since that year there has been a high death rate, for the people are sadly neglected and the food is extremely scarce, hence why I have agitated so strongly in Ottawa for the introduction of the domesticated reindeer into that territory. It seems to me that in a few years we shall have few, if any, Eskimos left alive, for tuberculosis is playing havoc with the people, through lack of suitable food, clothing, bedding and tents. Tents are always used in the summer season, and now, through lack of skin clothing, in winter, too. I must confess that I am somewhat pessimistic with regard to the protection of my people, the Eskimos, for little or nothing has been done in an adequate way after my nine years' appealing. Those who have seen the conditions and have any interest in these helpless people realize the urgency of the need. A trader with many years' experience wrote the government that 'things were getting worse each month.' Yet nothing that will adequately meet the situation is done. I am not leaving a stone unturned in seeking to arouse public interest in these people, but we lack concerted action.

"The Right Hon. Arthur Meighen in his appeal for those people said, on June 26th, 1925, in the House of Commons: 'I do not know any trust we have more sacred than seeing to it that some means of keeping up the Eskimo race is provided and that they are not simply allowed to die right at our doorstep as mere dogs.'

"I certainly appreciate your kindly interest.

"With all good wishes, I remain,

"Yours most sincerely,

"W. G. WALTON."

Now, just another word about the Eskimos, who know nothing about a bird treaty between the United States and Canada. How can it be that they are destroying our fowls, when the swan population jumped from five hundred or

seven hundred to over twenty thousand the first ten years they were given absolute protection by the bird treaty?

To you Yankees who are not well acquainted with the Canadians let me introduce them. A real North American Canadian is the same human being that you have in Ohio, Michigan or Minnesota or any other state. He has neither split feet nor antlers and if his body was built in proportion with his heart he couldn't crawl in a box-car. Our accent may differ a little from yours, the same as the accent of people in one state differs from the accent of people in another state.

While hunting and trapping in our far northern wilds, fifteen or twenty-five miles from any human being, I have often gone in an old deserted lumber camp or a trapper's cabin and there, hanging from the highest peak of the ceiling, is a wire that deer mice cannot get up or down. This wire is holding a loaf or two of bread, out of reach of animals, ready for a brother human being who might lose his way and fall by the wayside hungry. You may find a big telescope tin pail that contains a knife and fork, a baking-pan and a few hard biscuits and enough flour to sustain life for a week or so. I am only using these back-woods rough-and-ready facts to illustrate to you the principles of a real Canadian and, as to our conserving ideas, I will give you this fact. Mourning doves nest in southern Ontario by the thousands and are given absolute protection on account of their vast value as weed seed destroyers, yet there are several states which have an open season on them.

Now, let me again repeat to you my plan. Let the leaders of every conservation association in America get in touch with each other and arrange a time and place for a grand gathering. Then let each association take the

responsibility of getting their members there, and I know we can do things.

During the eight months these birds are gone from their winter home, we can replant their natural feeding-grounds and make them five times as productive. We can move them one hundred miles in one year and take them to pure lakes and marshes where we can have many vast sanctuaries, financed and controlled by the federal govern-



A Bird's-eye View to the North from Jack Miner's Observation Tower. The trees around the ponds serve as a windbreak for wild fowl and also as a shelter and nesting-place for song and insectivorous birds.

ment, with plenty of game guardians to feed and protect these birds. These to be the same as the county sanctuaries only on a larger scale. But, you must remember that there must be no shooting within the sanctuary nor within one mile of its borders, for a sanctuary where birds are fed and shooting is permitted even one day a week is only a systematic slaughter house. What could I do here on my sanctuary with a gun one hour a week?

We can amend that treaty by shortening that unreason-

able, long open season and providing for a small, federal control bag limit that will give justice to all and favor none. In fact, if we will work harmoniously together and take God at His word, we can distribute these migratory fowl over every county in America. As proof of this statement, to-day we are having one of the worst blizzards I ever saw in southern Canada and, during this Christmas holiday, there were between two and three thousand wild geese resting within gunshot of where I am sitting, and, as soon as it fairs up, they will again be all over the county, and just and right they should, for they belong to the people of North America, just as much as the free air that we breathe belongs to us all. But, if it was not for the established home here, when they left Hudson Bay eight or ten weeks ago, they would have gone right on over the top and piled up with the rest in the southern states, where they would stay till the last of February.

Yes, dear people of America, if we will only allow our hearts to control, we can have wild life and have it more abundantly, and everlasting life can start right here on earth.

INTERFERING WITH NATURE

IN GLANCING over the many articles written on the crow in our Canadian papers, I notice several writers fall back to this old wornout argument, "interfering with the balance of Nature." Now, dear readers, I would like a full explanation of the meaning. Does it really mean that no person should attempt to assist Nature? If that is what you are trying to tell me, let me kindly say you are wrong, for I have tested it out and know if man will take God at His promise and work in harmony with Him that man can even change the migrating route of the fowls of the air.

Now, remember, I only have an A B C, Sunday-school education, but there are a few of His lovable promises I have been privileged to test out, and I know they are true. For illustration, I ask you to read Genesis 1: 21-26 and 28, when He said, "Let man have dominion over all." Could anything be written plainer? Last summer our Nettie raised sixty bred-to-lay Plymouth Rocks. We killed and ate twenty-two of the twenty-five roosters. The pullets started laying in October. Now, if we had left the twenty-five cockerels with the thirty-five pullets, would we have had eggs all winter? Don't forget the fowls of the air are all ours and they will come to us for our assistance and protection.

Forty-eight years ago this spring, our family moved here on the farm that was then all woods, but on our arrival we were terrorized by the rattlesnake stories we heard and, really, I was expecting to see snakes as large as clothes props, that would strike at a distance of ten or fifteen feet away, and then all would be over except a brief report



Dorothy Perkins Roses which "Uncle Jack" has "improved" to this stage.

in the weekly town paper—"Those who knew him best, loved him most," and so forth. Well, in a few months, I got acquainted with those rattlers, but, believe me, they were only a little larger than our largest garter snakes and could only strike about a foot or eighteen inches. I have killed as high as six on one Sunday. In fact, I would hunt for hours to find a rattler, just to tease him and get him striking a stick. But in a few short years the danger was all over, for, where the snakes were, grew the fields of waving wheat and corn, but, mind you, in order to do this, we had to "interfere with Nature." Which was the best for humanity—a rattlesnake jungle or a productive grain field?

My esteemed friend, Mr. Thos. Baty, of London, Ontario, kindly says: "If Jack ever had a pet crow, he never would kill it." Really, this makes me laugh. Say, I wonder if there is a man in America who has gathered up more pets from the woods than I have. Crows, crows, why, bless your life, I have had them by the dozens, and I will admit they are just as cute as they are black. I once had one that would say "Look out!" so plain and sharp that he would cause you to flinch, but I never kept but one to be over a year old. Then he, like all the rest, died guilty of murder in the first degree.

In 1898 I enclosed four acres with a wire fence seven feet high. There I raised English and ringneck pheasants for profit. This pheasantry was right alongside of my brick and drain-tile manufacturing plant. I could watch my machinery and overlook the pheasantry all from the same spot. In this way I made my hobby more than self-sustaining and gathered stores of knowledge about the enemies of our birds and, let me say to any young man, breeding game birds for profit is a lovable occupation and

there is good money in it. The seven-foot fence is not necessary. All that is required is a dog-proof fence. But, remember, unless you educate yourself how to destroy their many enemies, you had better give up the job about two weeks before you start, for this little, innocent-looking weasel, that is no larger than a Northern Ontario chipmunk, will kill from twenty to thirty of your baby pheasants in one night and crawl through one-inch-mesh wire-netting to do



At "Uncle Jack's" Front Door.

it. But, remember, you are "interfering with the balance of Nature" if you kill him.

I believe the indoor naturalist calls him the mouse weasel because the greater part of his food is mice. Crows must be checked or they will steal every egg laid, unless your brood pens are under netting. But, after the young pheasants were hatched, I found the hawks and weasels their worst enemy. Fifty rods due north of my engine-room door is an elm tree, and morning after morning have

I seen a crow perched in the top watching my neighbor's turkey hen come through the line fence just ninety rods east of the tree. Mr. Crow would sit and watch and the very minute the turkey came out of the fence row and started back toward home, he would fly straight over and get the egg she had laid. This could all be seen with my field-glasses. Smart? I should say so. They are the shrewdest thieves of the bird family. But you say to kill one you are "interfering with the balance of Nature," for God put them here. Yes, I say, God also put the bed bug here, but He gave man dominion over them and the present generation would hardly know one if they saw it.

Crows! God did not put them here to control our poultry, nor our song, insectivorous and game birds. He did not even allow them the privilege of controlling themselves. He left all of this for man to do. Please think that over and look up what He says regarding this point. And as for the grasshoppers the crows eat, this turkey hen's family would condense all them into a Thanksgiving dinner or into twenty-five or fifty cents a pound, just as you choose.

Now I am not contradicting a word which has been said about the crows eating a few wire-worms and grubs and so forth, but here is what I know about it. If he can find them, he will rob at least one hundred of our more desirable birds' nests in order to raise his family of four or five, while, if any one of these murdered song and insectivorous birds were left to mature, he would do twice as much good as a crow ever did.

Now, if a man wants to make money that man must study money. The prospector is more apt to find earthly gold than the astronomer. In other words, if a man concentrates on one line he is more apt to catch something on that one hook.

My friend, Mr. Baty, says that if I had had a pet crow to study the crows' habits, I would know more about them. Let me reply to my friend and kindly say that when he has studied them enough to catch them by the thousands, he will know more about them. Personally, I have studied birds more than I have my financial obligations and I am glad of it. They have brought me closer to God and man. If my life's study hasn't taught me something about the habits of the crow, how did I catch five hundred and ten of those organized murderers at one catch? Will you please think that over? I do wish there was nothing but good in the ways of all birds, for I don't want to kill any of them; but how can I be humane and protect a baby murderer?

In the spring of 1914, I drove to Point Pelee, a distance of about fifteen miles, where my intimate friend, Mr. Forest H. Conover, and I pulled three hundred and sixty little red cedar seedlings out of the sand. There were none of them over a foot in height. I brought them home and planted them in the clay on May 15, 1914. I cultivated them for five years and to-day fully ninety-five per cent. of them are over twelve feet high and have been bearing fruit for the last three or four years. Now, isn't that "interfering with Nature?" This is where the five robins that wintered here got their food and, oh say, this winter we have had a cardinal added to the songsters and there hasn't been a day but what he has sung for us and he has fairly set me cardinal crazy—or wise—and is going to be the cause of more of my "interfering with Nature," for I am going to import some of these winter and summer singers. I am going to put a pair in each cage. Then, in March, I will let the male bird out, but will feed him on the outside of the cage. Here he will stay, just flittering and singing among

the trees, but will not go far from his mate, who is still in captivity. Then, after he has got well acquainted with the whole outside proposition, I will let her out and in this way I expect to have the whole place cardinal with song.

Dear readers, don't let me try it first. Jump in ahead of me. It can be done. Yes, if you are privileged to live in the country, you can make your home into a little earthly heaven by "interfering with the balance of Nature,"



This is a Common Mallow, brought to Twice Its Usual Size.

as you call it, but, as I term it, "assisting Nature," for you can get seedling trees from our government forestry departments, free of charge. If you will plant five hundred of them in the proper place and formation around your home, by cultivating them the same as you would hills of corn for the first five summers, which will not take you over one day a year, in ten years' time these trees will be from twelve to fifteen feet high and will break the wind off your home and, on a cold wintry day, will reduce your fuel bill and, if

you can be big enough to ignore the criticism of men and take God's promise as a guide, your assistance will double and treble the quantity and quality of the birds at your home every year.

Scotch pines I planted on a sticky clay field in the spring of 1914 have now grown into a lovely little forest, but the lower limbs are bent by the weight of from three to five thousand mourning doves that have roosted there during August, September and October of the last few years.



In the Middle of the Scotch Pine Forest Planted from Seedlings Just Ten Years Ago.

On this beautiful frosty morning, which father used to call "the 17th of Ireland," I awoke before the stars had closed their eyes and how could I go to sleep again and miss such a musical feast, for that cardinal I had mentioned apparently had his voice focused right on my open window, saying in distinct tones: "Good cheer! Good cheer! Good cheer!" This is mingled with the low notes of the song sparrows and even the robins are trying to join in the chorus. The lovable mourning doves, one of God's chief mourners, in low voices, are saying: "Khoo-coo-coo!"

In spite of all this, I will admit I was about to doze back into dreamland again when, all at once, the honking of at

least a thousand wild geese seemed to echo from every spot on the premises, saying: "Home again!" Really, my thoughts drifted nearly one-half century back to the morning we left Ohio, when a dear old Yankee by the name of Calvin Pease said to me: "Good-bye, Jackie." Then, as he gripped father's hand, which I believe was for the last time, he said: "John, do you think you can make a living over in Canada for your big family?" Father apparently gripped his hand tighter and he looked him square in the face and replied: "Calvin, we are going to make more than a living—we are going to make a life," but never did the interpretation of this statement ring louder in my living-room than it did this morning, March 17th.

FISHING ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE BOAT

IT HAS been proven that if a man writes an article stating what he knows about crows, he will get lots of people interested. I believe the same could be said if one wrote his experience in raising calves or growing tobacco. My father (the best man who ever lived) compelled me to split rails to make a recreation ground for our pigs. But now, let us banish all such insignificant side issues from our minds for a while and think of earth's future hope—our young manhood; those whom God created in His own image after His own likeness and gave them dominion over all these lower creatures.

Not so very long ago I noticed an article in the press stating "that all ditches must be railed or filled in to protect the motorist." This I am strongly in favor of, but what about our country children on their way to and from the little red schoolhouse? Have they been considered at all? I am compelled to say "*No.*" I don't believe they have.

Just recently, my boy drove me to Windsor, a distance of twenty-six miles, and I counted eighty-five school children dodging their way to school along our cement highway and, to me, it looked pitifully wicked. One little fellow actually fell into the ditch in his effort to escape these dodging gas-burners that came upon him from east and west. To our people of Canada, let me frankly say, I would sooner see a bunch of our children using the railroad track for a school path than to see them on our automobile highways where their rights have never been considered.

And, if we were fishing on the right side of the boat, I am sure they would have first consideration, for what will Canada profit if we gain the whole world and lose the



"Uncle Jack" built this walk beside the highway in front of his home for the safety of the children.

rising generation of our boyhood and girlhood? Yes, you may be riding in your big limousine with your own darling boy at the wheel when you meet or pass this self-neglected, long-haired, bashful little fellow with his dinted, little

dinner pail in his hand and a bunch of handed-down books under his arm. Yet, you have no proof that your boy will be a greater asset to Canada than he will be. Remember, the biggest men this world ever knew were born barefooted.

In speaking of Queen Victoria, my father once said to me: "Jack, if you had known her, you are a man that would have dearly loved her. God bless her." He said: "I well remember the day she was crowned," and then he went on to say that one day she was passing a bunch of under-privileged children. She stopped and spoke to them and some of the royalty chastised her for doing so, but father said the dear soul wrung her hands as she replied: "I like to speak to them *all*, for we don't know who the coming men are."

Now please don't understand me to say that all country school children are under-privileged. No, no, no! But I do say that in building our get-me-there-quick highways the safety of our school children has not been considered and the paths they did have, in the majority of cases, have been destroyed and no provision made for them whatever. Personally, I don't like to hear a man complain unless he has a carefully-thought-out plan of improvement and, first of all, let us stop and consider the amount of material it takes to build a highway from sixteen to twenty feet wide and eight inches thick. Then let us consider the insignificant amount of practically the same material it will take to build a school-children's path two feet wide and four inches thick, six feet or more from the rolling traffic, with a nice piece of green sod separating the two. Please figure it all out and ask yourself if this really is an extravagant suggestion when five per cent. of the material used for the twenty-foot road will build our little loved ones a path in

the safety zone. Again let me ask, have we become so penny wise and pound foolish as to allow our hearts to be completely crowded out and silly, speedy recreation scare the foundation of our future hope into the gutter?

In closing, I have this request of my readers. If through personal observance or experience you have reason to believe that what I have outlined above is true and we are fishing on the wrong side of the boat, will you please help us cast our nets to the right by having a close-up, heart-to-heart talk with your government representative? If possible, take him for a drive where he can see for himself. At the same time, let each of us do our bit, for "how can I go up to my Father if the lad be not with me?"

THE CANADA GOOSE ON CANADA'S FLAG

IN REPLY to many requests as to my opinion of the white-throated sparrow as our Canadian national bird, I have said that the white-throat is a lovely bird, but not a bit more so than the white-crown sparrow, bluebird or some of the warblers, or yet the rose-breasted grosbeak. My, what a beautiful, lovely, musical variety we have to select from! And, I say, by all means let us have a Canadian national bird, but let it be the Canada goose, the noblest creature that ever lived on land, in the air, or on the water—yes, and on the ice or snow he is perfectly at home.

I was born under the protection of the eagle's wing, and I respect that great bird as much as it is necessary for any man to, but our Canada goose is far superior. When in captivity he will wash himself up and keep clean and respectable, and, in about three years, with his mate, will settle down to raise a family of from four to eight, as all Canadians should. Wild geese pair off for life. I never knew them to even make an application for divorce. The male guards his mate on the nest. As soon as the young hatch, he protects them from the opposite side of the mother, keeping the babies between the parents. He will leave his family for her and for her only, but he will die in the front ranks for any of them.

I have placed their bushels of corn around one of my mating pairs, and, of the thousands of hungry geese that come here, none would interfere with these little plots to even take one kernel.

When travelling in the air, the male Canada goose

leads the way, breaking the air for his sweetheart, who is quartering behind him, and his family travels next to her. In brief, he is one of the most self-sacrificing, godly-principled leaders the human eye ever beheld, and to know him is to love and admire him. There is not a human being on earth so good but what personal acquaintance with our noble Canada goose will give him a desire to live better.

THE CANADA GOOSE AS CANADA'S EMBLEM

ABOUT one year ago I was interviewed by many reporters from our Canadian papers wanting a statement regarding our proposed national bird. After such requests had been made to me repeatedly, I wrote to the Canadian papers requesting that our already-established



Wild Geese Headed for the Breeding Grounds in the North.

Canada goose be chosen as our national bird. I said, in brief, he is one of the most self-sacrificing, Godly-principled leaders the human eye ever beheld, to know him is to love and admire him, and there is not a human being on earth so good but that personal acquaintance with our noble Canada goose will give him a desire to live better. And now I come to you again and ask one and all to think for yourselves, and if Canada is to have a national bird let us

revive the discussion. This lovely bird is already established throughout this continent as the Canada goose. Why hesitate to choose the noblest bird in the world as the emblem of the best and most promising country in the world? I want all fair-minded Canadians to read and re-read a letter I received last week, but before doing so I want all to know that, previous to receiving this letter, I did not know this man was on earth, and, according to his own hand writing, he doesn't know whether I am a man, woman or child. I might also say that the bird he speaks of was tagged last April, along with four hundred and fifty others that I caught, tagged and liberated here at my home to study their route of migration. The letter "S" denotes spring and "27th" the year, all my fall tags being stamped with a letter "F," my name not being on tag, only my post office address, which was "Write Box 48, Kingsville, Ontario."

The letter is as follows:

"ENGELHARD, NORTH CAROLINA, U.S.A.,
"November 2nd, 1927.

"Dear Sir or Madam,
"At Kingsville, Ontario, Canada.

"I had the good fortune of meeting one of your neighbors yesterday on the first day of the hunting season, and think he was the most remarkable goose I have ever seen. A flock of twenty-five or more geese lit to my decoys just out of gunshot, of which he was the leader, and as the flock started in he seemed to realize there was danger near my decoy geese, and tried hard to keep them back. He swam to and fro between the flock and the decoys, fighting at the flock, trying to drive them away, and when they persisted to come in he would fly off and circle around, hollering as hard as he could, and, when he saw the flock was coming in, anyway, in spite of warning, he came and lit between them and the decoys, as much as to say, if it must be done,

take me and let these children go. He being the largest goose in the flock, I took him first, the others got away, and, after the excitement was over, I brought him in the blind and saw his tag, and realized how nobly he laid down his life for his friends, my conscience hurt me. My companion and myself talked about the splendid traits of character the goose had shown, and we imagined him some pet that a little boy or girl had found and raised until he was grown, and carried and put with other geese to choose a mate and fly away to the safe, sunny South to spend the winter. Many will go back, but this brave gander was the first to fall, but in falling displayed such nobility as to convince me of the sin of killing game just for the sport of it, and if ever I go again it will be because I want a goose to eat and not to shoot them down just to see them die. On the tag, besides the address, was Ps. 37-3, 'Trust in the Lord,' which is the first line of the third verse of the 37th Psalm. '27,' I suppose, was the year. There was an 'S' off to itself, and I imagine the gander was named Sam or Sallie. My wife is putting dinner on the table now and I can smell the baked goose, and the sweet potatoes, collords, cranberry sauce with oyster dressing, so I am just now consoling myself with that passage of Scripture when the Lord said, 'Arise, Peter, slay and eat.' I really wish I could have killed an untagged goose and let old Sam go back home. I feel like you will look for him when the others come north again. I wish you would write me, tell me your name, and how you and old Sam became friends.

"Yours very truly,

"(Signed) BILLY HARRIS."

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WILD GEESE

ALTHOUGH I am a busy man, I feel it my duty to answer an article entitled "Wild Geese," written by Mr. W. R. Tighe, of Manitoulin Island, and published in *Rod and Gun.*

First, Mr. Tighe's letter:

"Editor, *Rod and Gun:*

"Having read Jack Miner's article in *The Detroit Times*, regarding the decrease in numbers of wild geese, I am taking the liberty to write you on the subject.

"Last fall, about the tenth of November, 1926, there was a snow-storm on here. At that time the wild geese were in flight South and they settled in the bay of our town, Gore Bay, Manitoulin Island. There were acres and acres of geese. People standing on the bluffs looked down on them and old timers here said they had never seen the like in their time. The fish tugs coming into port at dusk had to plough through them, and the fishermen said there must have been millions of geese. That same day, out in Gordon Township, the fields were covered with them, also at Ice Lake. The sky was black with their flight, which lasted nearly all day, passing overhead nearly two miles wide. They also flew over Gore Bay all night and kept citizens awake with their honking.

"This does not look as if the wild geese are being shot and getting scarce. If Mr. Miner had to tag all of these, he would have some time.

"I can verify the above statements with the names of prominent citizens of our town and farmers from the surrounding country, and our farmers' boys, who went West on the Harvesters' Excursion, tell me that they saw wild

geese last fall in Alberta and Saskatchewan by thousands in the parts of the provinces where they were working, and all over the West they were plentiful.

"Yours very truly,

"Gore Bay, Ont. W. R. TIGHE."

Now, it is true wild geese are decreasing in our Western provinces, and ninety per cent. of the early settlers, whom it has been my privilege to meet and who were there when



"A Handful of Corn instead of a Thimbleful of Shot" is the secret of this.

the geese were really plentiful, have asked me: "What has become of the wild geese? They used to be here by the countless thousands, but we do not see them any more."

From Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, where twenty-five years ago geese were extremely abundant, the Park Commissioner of that progressive city wrote our government and secured a permit for Jack Miner to catch and ship them two pairs of wild geese for their park, and, although I do not like this kind of transfer, yet under such circum-

stances I did give way, and did catch and express them six wild geese.

Remember, I spent October, 1922, October, 1923, and October, 1924, in these three prairie provinces, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. I visited over one hundred towns and cities and did most of my travelling by daylight, yet during that time I saw very few wild geese and, believe me, I tried to keep both eyes open, and, let me sadly say,



Wild Geese rising from the North Ponds.

if any person tells you that in our prairie provinces wild geese have decreased seventy-five per cent. during the last twenty-five years, you can believe every word of it.

Just recently the following item appeared in one of our local papers and I think it is worth reproducing:

"The four thousand sportsmen who made returns to the Saskatchewan game-keeper's department last year secured a total bag of 100,000 ducks, 26,000 prairie chickens, 6,000 ruffed grouse and 3,200 geese." Now, it will be noticed,

these hunters did not average one wild goose each. Does that say geese are increasing?

Now, why were these geese so thick at Manitoulin Island on November 10th, 1926? The story is quite a lengthy one, but as interesting as a piece of fiction.

About thirty-five years ago, my chief out-of-doors studies were, "Will a thirty-two-inch barrel bring 'em down farther than a thirty?" "Will Nitro powder ever drive a ball as accurately and as effectively as my old .45-70 black powder rifle puts 'em?" About that time, my brother, Ted, subscribed for *The American Field*, a sporting paper published in Chicago. A few years later, some kind friend mailed me a copy of the little sporting magazine known as *Rod and Gun in Canada*, published at Woodstock, Ontario. This little monthly magazine only contained ten or twelve pages, and, while I could read but a very little, yet the few pictures and so forth interested me. But later years brought blessings with them and, about the beginning of this century, I read a short article on our decreasing game. "Would our children have anything to shoot?" I really thought it was intended for such men as I, so in 1902 or 1903 I sounded the alarm in our town and tried to organize a game protective association, but made but very little progress, for the sneers and jeers almost got my goat.

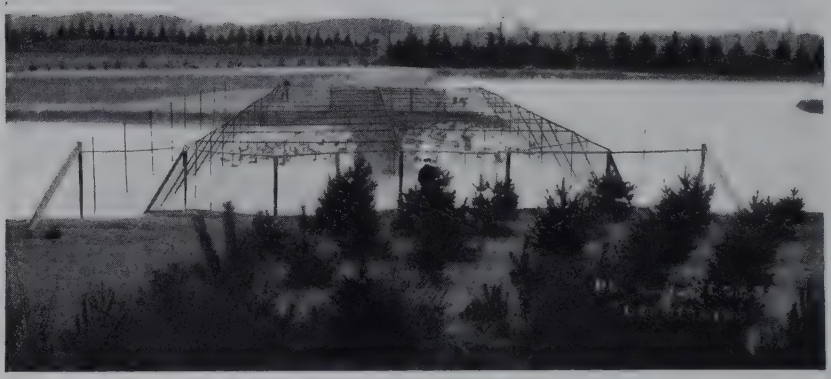
But, remember, I am of a determined make-up and nothing knows this better than the game I pursued in my younger days. Finally, the annual meeting time arrived and I was cheerfully greeted by a bunch of real live, determined gentlemen, chiefly from Leamington, Walkerville and Windsor, and in less than two hours the leadership of this little existing association was in the hands of some real live, educated gentlemen, whose hearts and souls were

all of one accord. The Essex County Game Protective Association was thoroughly organized and, while our association never has had a large membership, this little bunch of us have worked harmoniously together. There are usually about six from Leamington and the same from Windsor and Walkerville and only one from Kingsville, my own home town. There have been meetings where we have had between thirty and forty, but I am speaking of the average get-together bunch. For the last ten years we have held our meetings in our community club-house at my home. Yes, and I am sure God in heaven has been present with us, for to-day we have absolute proof that this little band of determined men, working heart, hand and mind together, have actually changed the migrating route of some of the fowls of the air and have caused the old timers of Manitoulin Island to say they have never seen the like in all their lives.

Now, how did all this come about? Why, about the time this organization was first thought of, I started harboring the geese at my home and these men backed me up with their brains, pen-points and influence. Finally, in 1910 or 1912, feed for these geese became a financial problem for me, so I went before our County Council and asked if they would recommend that the government assist me financially, and they passed an unanimous resolution requesting that our Ontario Government give me a grant of one hundred dollars per year to help feed these birds. That is the last I heard of that, so that's that.

I kept on feeding the geese and the geese kept on coming, but not till 1915 did any come in the fall. Then two families came. But last winter there were fully five thousand stayed until January 15th, and the snow was over a foot deep, my corn pile sinking so fast that I quit

feeding, and the geese went further south, where they evidently found bare ground. So you see I now have them with me for two and one-half months in the spring and as long as I will feed them in the fall and winter. Fortunately for me, the influence of this little organization I have already mentioned brought to my home Mr. J. B. Harkin, Commissioner of Dominion Parks. As Mr. Harkin stood before thousands and thousands of these dear old



The Goose Trap, from Above.

Canadian honkers, he apparently grasped the situation, and since then the Dominion Government is assisting me financially, as well as the Ontario Government. While these small grants are cheerfully accepted, yet both combined wouldn't pay twenty per cent. of the expense that I have been put to the last six years alone, for we have proven by my tagging system that we are now drawing the wild geese to my home for food and protection from all the southern states in United States east of the Mississippi, as well as from the states which border the Mississippi.

I often put out one hundred and twenty-five bushels of corn in an evening and it is all gone by ten o'clock the next day.

It will be interesting for you to know that when we first started feeding the geese in 1908, we carried the corn out in our pockets; the next year we used a basket, then a bag. Then we used bags and now we haul it out by the cart and wagon load and scatter it with the scoop shovel.



A Catch in the Goose Trap, from the Side.

Since 1915 I have caught and tagged between 1,950 and 2,000 Canada geese. The three maps show where the geese have been killed and the tags returned to me. The hub of the maps show where the geese were tagged and dots show where they were killed. The following day or two after they were seen at Manitoulin Island, there were four or five of this bunch that had my tag on killed along the east side of Lake Huron, on a direct line between Manitoulin Island and here, but they were soon piled up at my home.

Now, to the far-off readers who are not familiar with the map of Ontario, please let me say that Manitoulin is a large island near the north shore of Lake Huron, on a direct air line from my home to the nesting-grounds of these geese that have been gradually educated to come and spend at least one-third of their time with me, and on going to and from their nesting-grounds they pass over it twice a year, but mostly by night, as I have wired ahead of them



A Close-Up of One Corner of the Trap.

time and again and know that geese leaving here about one-half hour before sun-down cross over near Cochrane, Ontario, between six and eight a.m. This, of course, is on their northern flight. Cochrane, I believe, is about two hundred miles south of James Bay, which is the south arm of Hudson Bay and two hundred miles north of Manitoulin Island, and both are in a direct line, as my charts show, between my home and James and Hudson Bay. Thus, as Mr. Tighe says, it has caused the old timers to say they never saw the like.

Now, Mr. Tighe, possibly my grey hairs of experience will permit me to sound one kind word of warning to you where in your article you say, "if Mr. Miner had to tag all these geese he would have some time." This, you know in your own heart, is intended for a little slam. Please let us not do this. Slamming will not protect our birds or make Canada a more cheerful place to live, but, in closing, I just wish to say that there is not a shadow of a

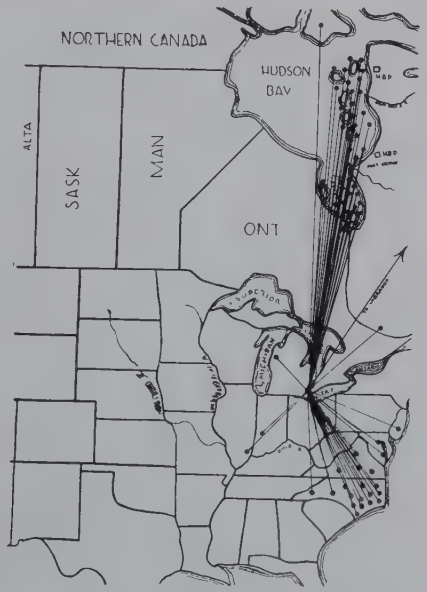


They're thick, aren't they? Wild Geese rising from the North Ponds.

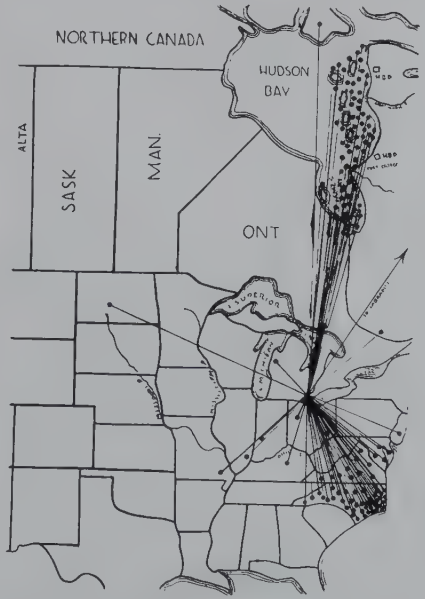
doubt but what at least five hundred of these geese that you saw or heard on November 10th, 1926, were carrying my tag, and, if you could possibly arrange to come to my home between next April 1st and 20th, any day except Sundays, you and I could have a heart-to-heart visit and be glad we met face to face in the presence of the fowls of the air that introduced us. Here is for more game for the rising and unborn generations!

MAPS SHOWING THE MIGRATION OF CANADA GEESE

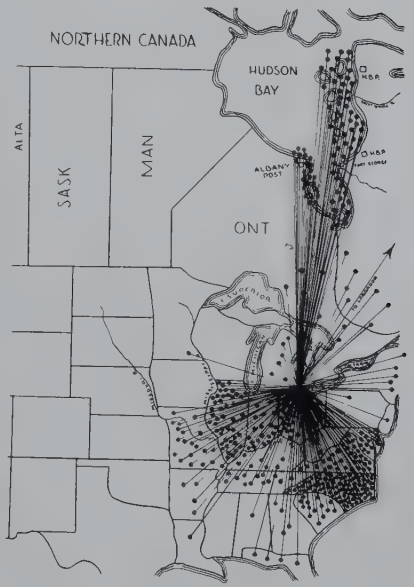
The dots on the maps below show the places from which tags have been returned to Jack Miner, and hence give exceedingly good evidence of the direction taken by the wild geese which have alighted on the Miner estate at Kingsville, Ontario. on their way north and south.



No. 1
Shows the returns from the first seven years Jack Miner's tagging system was used.



No. 2
Shows the returns of tags for two years additional up to 1924.



No. 3
Shows where geese were reported killed during 1926, 1927, 1928, not including any of former years.

DEER AND WOLVES

AMONG the editorials in the Toronto *Mail and Empire* of December 26th appeared the above words—"Deer and Wolves"—and, as I read and reread this most important article, I couldn't help but wish that all the editors in Ontario could be better posted on the destructiveness and cold-blooded, murderous acts of these timber wolves. Just to think that in Algoma District a doe was seen stumbling her way back and forth to a little stream and, when put out of her misery by a bullet, she was found to have one ham over half eaten away, and the shredded skin showed the marks of a devilish timber wolf's sharp teeth! This, of course, is an exceptional case, but it can be readily understood by men that know the letter A about sheep-dogs and wolves.

Now, who is chiefly to blame? I say, from personal knowledge, we so-called sportsmen are to blame. We meet in convention and the decreasing of the deer is being discussed. The still hunter condemns the dogs. The dog hunters claim it is the still hunters and the settlers, the latter killing them in the summertime, and I stand up and move that we recommend a buck law, so that only those with antlers be allowed to be shot. This apparently only increases the friction that is rapidly growing warmer, until the chairman can hardly keep two or three from talking at once, and, finally, we go home sorry we ever went and wishing we could recall every sharp word we have said. Meanwhile, the skulking timber wolf is gorging himself on our wild mutton, then coiling up in the sun, or under the drooping boughs of the second growth pines, licking his chops and laughing at our calamity.

Now, just a word about the nature of some of these so-called wild animals. There is the moose, the caribou and the snowshoe hare, all creatures of the solitude or virgin forest, while the red deer, white-tailed deer, or Virginia deer, which is one and the same animal, also the



Taken on "Uncle Jack's" Forty-Second Annual Hunting Trip in Northern Ontario.

cotton-tail rabbit, follow up the pioneer's axe. Yet we Ontario sportsmen, in our innocent ignorance, condemn the settler for the scarcity of the deer when, right down in our hearts, we know that where the country is partly settled we get our best deer hunting. Why? Simply

because the settlers keep the wolves in check and allow the deer to multiply far faster than the settlers kill them —that is why.

Just a word about the dogging of deer. We know there are a few of us that love the music of the hounds, yet our chief reason for taking the hound is to get the deer. Take the wolves out of Ontario and allow the deer to multiply by leaps and bounds, as they evidently would, and your dog question is settled, for as soon as the hunter knows that he can get his two or more deer, which could easily be allowed, he is not going to be bothered with a dog. Personally, I am opposed to dogging deer, but while ninety or ninety-five per cent. of the deer that are born in Ontario are being eaten up by wolves, I am in favor of allowing the hunter to get his deer any way he can, and, as for my suggesting the buck law, get the wolves out of the country and this law will automatically enforce itself, for no hunter is going to the woods and shoot a doe that has been nursing a fawn all summer when deer are plentiful enough for him to pick a three or four-year-old, fat, ten-point buck that weighs over two hundred pounds.

Let us turn the leaves back twenty-five years and take a look at the old trail that is grown up with personal knowledge. At that time, deer were very plentiful and as far north as Bisco, which is about one hundred miles northwest of Sudbury on C.P.R., there was a good sprinkling of deer right through to Fort William. But any novice of a hunter could get his two bucks as far north as Bisco. The caribou, for some unaccountable reason, were fast disappearing or moving farther north. At Stralak, which is about fifty miles west of Sudbury, I saw seventy-five deer the first two weeks of November, 1904. I saw twelve in one day and never fired a shot because I did not see the

buck I wanted. Five Kingsville tenderfoot hunters whom I directed there killed ten bucks that averaged over two hundred pounds each, but, in 1907, we saw the tracks of wolves and, in 1910, fully eighty or ninety per cent. of



For the last ten or fifteen years "Uncle Jack" has largely used field glasses rather than a gun.

the deer were gone. In fact, we saw the remnants of more dead deer than we saw live ones. There is a great percentage of people who claim wolves can only get the deer in winter, when the snow is deep. This is absolutely wrong for, as long as there is a live deer left where there are

wolves, you will see deer hair in the wolf stools all summer. This is only one of the many proofs of their dreaded ability to kill our deer. Remember, deer are only wild sheep and wolves are wild dogs and it is not because wolves are so abundant but because each wolf is so murderously destructive. Let one sheep dog go unchecked in your township and see how many sheep your council will have to pay for. There is one thing you can best believe—you will have more to pay for the first year than you will the second. We all know it would be far pleasanter for our government officials to report deer increasing, but they frankly admit they are decreasing, for ten years ago our two-dollar license permitted one to shoot two deer. Now, we pay four dollars for the privilege of shooting one deer —that is, providing you see this one to shoot. But please charge your memory with this, especially when you have your rifle in your hands, you are not supposed to shoot at something you don't see.

Why have these wolves increased so the last twenty years? To us backwoods men this is easier understood than the alphabet. I can trace it back to January, 1905, when I spent three or four weeks trapping with the Phillips family, who lived on Pansy Island, which is about ten miles north of Bisco. I arrived there on the evening of January 6th, 1905, and Grandpa Phillips, who was then sixty-three years of age, entertained me nearly the whole evening telling how he had poisoned three big timber wolves and found two of them and took them to Bisco, and the thirty-dollar bounty, fifteen dollars each, and how sure he was that he and I could find the other wolf. And that was only part of the rejoicing, for furs were going up. Mink were bringing as high as one dollar and fifty cents, and Mrs. Harry Phillips and her two oldest daughters,

who were twelve and fourteen years old, had a short trapping line out and came home with a beautiful fisher and took it to Bisco and got five dollars and a half, which was fully one-third more than they had ever got for a fisher. Harry Phillips got as high as three dollars for foxes he got while I was there. This, of course, was fully one-half more than foxes had been selling for, and still Grandpa Phillips, Harry and I would go fully fifteen miles to some of their poisoned bait, anxiously looking for another fifteen or thirty-dollar wolf bounty haul. At that time there were eleven in the Phillips family and they killed all the deer they required within one-half mile of their home.

What happened the next fifteen years? Furs continued soaring. Think of it, fisher selling for as high as one hundred and twenty-five dollars; mink, twenty dollars; beaver, thirty to fifty dollars; muskrats, four dollars! What is the result? These same fellows that were making five to ten trips to their wolf bait in order to collect fifteen-dollars bounty were getting five hundred dollars worth of furs with less exertion, and the wolves multiplied and ate the deer up alive.

I believe the Hon. E. C. Drury Government raised the wolf bounty to twenty-five dollars, but what temptation was that when the fact is one trapper could and did catch as high as a thousand dollars worth of furs in one month —(but not wolf furs). The beaver season opened in 1916 and our north country was overstocked with them, for in places they had become a nuisance. I could have taken you to seventy-five occupied beaver houses in one day. The above are all facts of the past twenty-five years. Since the Drury administration, the bounty has been set back to fifteen dollars, as it was in 1905 and other years. Now is the time, I say, to start anew, for if we could pay fifteen

dollars wolf bounty by charging a two-dollar license to shoot two deer, surely we can pay a thirty-dollar or forty-dollar or even fifty-dollar wolf bounty by charging the sportsmen five dollars or seven dollars to shoot one deer. As the editorial referred to says, "the hunters are good sports—



Studying Tree-Growth in Northern Canada.

they won't kick as long as they can get rid of the wolves." Now that the fur-bearing animals are gone, the trappers will gladly turn to the wolves, if they are financially induced to.

This last fall, 1927, I camped for three weeks on the

same ground where I have hunted for the last twenty years, where fur-bearing animals were so extremely abundant, and I did not see a sign of a living fur-bearing animal except one muskrat and a few fox tracks. There are a few foxes left, their pelts bringing the trapper more than he can get for a wolf. The deer are practically gone. One trapper told me he had not seen a deer for over a year. Please don't say that Jack Miner killed them, for I have not killed a deer since 1921 and I never expect to shoot another. I shot my last moose in 1917. I want my grandchildren to see five times as many deer in Ontario as I have seen and they are going to by taking the wolves out.

What about the future, dear readers, especially the hundred per cent. Canadians? Please give this most important proposition every heart-beat of your attention for at least five minutes and, above all, do your own personal thinking. Right here in Ontario we have at least three hundred thousand square miles of the best deer country ever laid out-of-doors, practically lying idle because of the timber wolf. Deer are only wild sheep. Exterminate the wolf; then, for example, one pair of deer on each square mile—how many deer will we few scattering hunters have to select from in ten years? How many bucks would our five-dollar or seven-dollar license permit us to kill? Again, let us ask you to please do your own personal thinking and figuring. I say this is not a fairy thought. It is not a worthless dream. It is a suggestion that sooner or later will bear fruit. The wolf will be controlled, and, although he is the slyest, shyest, shrewdest, strongest-scented and most cunning four-footed animal in North America, remember *God gave man dominion over all* and the human brains of Ontario are going to work harmoniously together and beat the wolf to death. One point we will all agree on. That is

the same glittering thing that has practically exterminated our choice fur-bearing animals will treat the wolf in the same manner, the glittering price. Jesse James was the shrewdest outlaw the world ever knew, but the price got him.

Please let us take one more glimpse at our vast north playground. We board our fastest west-bound train at Ottawa and in less than two hours we are in the deer country and we are going west and north-west two days and a night before we reach the Lake of the Woods, and from my home to Hudson Bay it must be eight hundred miles north, as the goose flies. In the summer of 1922, I camped for two weeks near Minaki Inn, Lake of the Woods, with one hundred and twenty-five Winnipeg boys, and the second morning we were there three boats set out fishing with hooks and lines, and returned inside of two hours with so many choice fish that the chief cook gave orders not to catch another fish for a week. I travel quite a lot in the United States, and I tell you Ontario Canadians the eyes of eastern North America are turning towards our vast summer playground and, if properly managed, we have a Klondike ahead of us. I say, compel these pure-air seekers to leave their fire at home, but let them come in and inhale our climate. They are good people and we need their good money to develop our unlimited resources. While they are doing a little fishing during the summer and seeing the deer as plentiful as they could be, there is no limit to the unresident license price they would pay for the privilege of coming back in the fall and being sure of their one buck. One thing we all know, their fifty-dollar non-resident would pay more wolf bounty than our five-dollar or seven-dollar. This, saying nothing of the hundreds of dollars they will leave in our country when they have a good taste in their mouths to come back.

Now, with all due respect to our present leaders—they are evidently doing the best they can alone; but, sportsmen and all respectable citizens of Ontario, our leaders need our support. When our game protective associations meet in convention throughout Ontario and get back of them, we can make them powerful enough to organize national wolf bounty regulations. Why was our beloved, self-sacrificing, Christian-spirited Sir Wilfrid Laurier such a powerful leader for good. Not all in himself. No, no; but because the best thinking people of Canada got behind him and helped him carry his cross. How we love to refer to our Sir John A. Macdonald, one of the best and most powerful leaders Canada ever knew! How this wonderful man, in spite of the sneers and jeers of the opposition, connected Canada together so that Halifax can shake hands with Vancouver in a few days instead of that many months. But this was accomplished through the fact that the best and most foresighted people in Canada stood firm behind him with willing hands.

I now come to my closing point. To-day we are more anxious than ever to keep our boys in Canada. This appears to be our national problem and I say to fathers and neighbors, in the name of God, take your boys on an annual outing. Introduce them to our northern wilds and the ways of the creatures that occupy it. Let your boy take his fishing tackle and catch a few speckled beauties or a few lake trout. Warn him to never get in a canoe until he can swim at least a quarter of a mile. Let him take his compass and learn to pick his way in and out of the big woods while you follow with him. Teach him how to hunt against the wind and when he approaches the tops of the hills to stop and peep carefully over. And, before you can realize it, this big boy will develop into a successful hunter

and realize he is a millionaire in out-of-door privileges and he will become a healthy and stronger man to face the world through the fact that his enjoyment is out-of-doors recreation. And that boy will stay in Canada.

In closing, let me quote the following poem, written by my esteemed friend, Rev. E. C. Hunter, of Toronto:

WHERE THE NORTH BEGINS

You tell me you're a stranger
From lands that lie afar;
You ask me where the North begins
And what its boundaries are.

The North is not an area,
It's not a piece of land;
The North's a spirit and a life,
Which you must understand.

Up where the handclasp's stronger,
Far from the city dins,
Up where the smile lasts longer—
That's where the North begins.

Up where the sun shines brighter,
Where worries easily end,
Up where the snow lies whiter—
You're in the North, my friend.

Where every man's a fighter,
And no one quits the game;
Where the bond of friendship's tighter,
And honor's more than fame;

Where you feel the fresh wind blowing
From pine woods clean and pure;
Where you find the trout streams flowing,
You're in the North, for sure.

Where fewer hearts are aching,
 And fewer men walk broke,
Where the world's still in the making,
 And all hearts carry hope;

Where fellows don't mind giving,
 And we ask not creed or name;
Where the fun of life is living,
 For life is worth the game.

Have you left the camp at daylight,
 As dawn was breaking forth,
Carried back your deer at twilight?
 Then you've really known the North.

Have you smelled the bacon frying
 By streams where the big trout swims?
Made friends without half-trying?
 That's where the North begins.

For the North is not a country,
 Measured by terms of land;
The real North is a spirit,
 Which you must understand.

EDUCATIONAL CONSERVATION

OF ALL the home-run hits in the first innings I have ever enjoyed was that made by Father Crowley, of Algoma, and published in *The Globe* of March 17th, when at the game conservation meeting this reverend gentleman suggested an educational conservation campaign, and now please allow my grey hairs of personal knowledge, observation and tested out experience to add a few lines to this keynote suggestion—education.

The facts are that our game in Northern Ontario is in the eleventh-hour stage, and fining a man for blood that he has already spilt will not allow that animal to multiply, but, rather, in many cases, it will make that man a worse outlaw. For illustration: You are a settler in our undeveloped North, and you are doing a little trapping in order to better clothe your family, and the law says you must not take beaver or otter, but allows the Indian to come for one hundred miles and tear the dams out and destroy every one on your trapping ground. Would the men that framed that law observe it? No!

Now, the reader will please pardon me if I am a little partial to the settler. It is experienced poverty and need that has molded my heart that way; therefore I don't consider I am to blame. Fifty years ago this April, my father moved his big family from Ohio here to Canada, and all the money he took in the first summer we were here was four dollars and a half ($4.50), for one hundred and fifty bushels of wood ashes that we sold for three cents per bushel. We gathered these ashes where we burnt the log-

piles to plant our corn. My brother, Ted, was seventeen and I was thirteen, and I am absolutely certain that we two older boys made more money with our traps and guns to purchase warm clothing the first three years we were in Canada than father and all of us got off the wet, newly-chopped-out farm. Dear mother begged to go back to Ohio, but we boys saved the situation, and to-day this dear old homestead is not for sale or exchange for the rest of the world.

Brother soon ceased market hunting, but I followed it up every fall until I was twenty-one years of age and the murder I committed in my uneducated, innocent ignorance privileges me conscientiously to speak to the other fellow who might also be standing in his own light. For illustration: There was a long-whiskered farmer who lived about five miles from town. He owned fifty acres of land, and had a rail fence all around it. He was just good enough a farmer to allow the weeds and brush to grow about six inches higher than his corn. This made a perfect winter harbor for bob-white quail. This man would not allow shooting on his premises. I went to him personally and asked permission, but he stoutly refused. Now, he was an enthusiastic politician, and when he went to town on Saturday morning with a basket of eggs on his arm you could best believe he was going to talk politics the rest of the day, and would not return home until night. If there was no snow on the ground, in less than an hour I would be knocking his quail right and left, and would not leave a track because I would wear moccasins. I was the only market hunter in this township, and whose quail was I shooting? Why, bless your life, when I gave the matter a second thought in the right direction, I saw that I was shooting my own brood stock for next year. In other

words, in my bloodthirsty ignorance, I was closing an account that gave me over two hundred per cent. dividends.

In July, 1925, I spent two weeks in Alaska and Northern British Columbia. One evening I strolled into a butcher



"Uncle Jack" Works with Flowers as well as with Birds.

shop where a man was selling the hind quarter of a young bull moose to the butcher. I inquired of this gentleman as to where he got the moose. He stated that he went down to the lake about twelve miles to mow wild hay, and near where

he was working he saw five moose feeding in a small lake. He shot the young bull and let the two cows and calves go. The next morning two motor boats, loaded with four native hunters, started out to mow the rest of the hay, and at the same time there were at least twenty-five guests at the summer resort that would have given at least a dollar a minute for five minutes of their lives to have seen these moose alive. These "intelligent" men, standing in their own light, killed the biggest living financial proposition that ever rapped at their door of need. Moreover, they could have gone to other shallow lakes and gathered lily-pad roots to feed the moose, and in less than two weeks they could have been taking in tens of dollars each every day, and left the moose alive with their pictures scattered over North America as an advertisement for this summer resort. But they killed them and sold their hind quarters for five cents a pound, and that opportunity is gone forever.

Now, I will admit, there are extreme cases of ignorance; yet we are all stumbling along more or less. But what is the remedy for such blindness? As I see it, there are three hopes: education—first, second, and last. Remember, education isn't all gathered with one's nose between book covers. I think Pat worded it right when he said: "Get all the education you can and then add the learning."

I want to admit I have no knowledge concerning fish propagation, but only want to say: What other people are doing we can improve on, for I am absolutely certain that there is no state or province in America that surpasses Ontario for game fish possibilities.

One Sunday morning when I was in Northern British Columbia, I drifted over to an Indian camp. While there I saw a man come along the shore in a canoe. I approached and asked: "Have you been hunting?"

"No, just fish," was the reply.

"Any luck?"

"Not much, just little," and as he stepped ashore he took a two-bushel bag fully two-thirds filled with fish from his canoe and poured them out on the green, green grass in front of me. Reader, my eyes almost struck fire and my heart leaped with the thrill, as this bag of beauties wriggled and flopped there in the sun on that green sod. My first words were: "Mister, I never saw fish like those before."

"No," he replied, "I don't guess likely you ever did, 'cause dem is grayling trout." If my memory serves me right, these fish were about fifteen inches long, and would weigh about two pounds each, and they were as uniform as silver dollars.

We may have grayling trout in Ontario, but I have never seen one. Yet I firmly believe we can have them here by the millions. Another interesting sight for me was when I visited a game fish hatchery near Portland, Oregon. Here a little river came spouting over the high rocks and fell into a spray fully one hundred and fifty feet below, where the river took another short tumble into a small lake. This lake appeared to have hundreds upon hundreds of big rainbow trout that were so tame they would actually follow you. These, I understood, were their brood fish. Then I was shown some large cement vats, about eight feet in width and fully one hundred and fifty feet long. The water, which was from three to five feet deep in these vats, automatically came in at one end and out at the other, and I know I am not exaggerating when I say there were tens of millions of fingerling trout there, all ready for distribution over the state. But what interested me most was that only one man and his wife were required, apparently, in caring for this wonderful success. This gentleman manager told

me that those baby trout, that were then about the size of one's finger, grew to weigh two pounds and over in two years.

Now there is one great mistake that fully ninety per cent. of our people are making. They are looking upon this conservation question as a sportsman's proposition only, when the fact is it is the biggest undeveloped commercial opportunity our vast and beautiful Ontario has to offer us. Yes, conservation, as I see it, has got every citizen of Ontario by the coat collar, holding on with both hands, and looking us square in the face, begging us to help ourselves.

In closing, let me make a suggestion that I trust all readers will consider carefully. Let us all line up and hold the biggest national educational conservation convention that ever was held in North America, and let us hold it at Sudbury, Ont., where it will be in easy reach of the trappers and guides, or, in other words, close to the men who know; and let every sportsman's organization in Canada be represented, and let us hold this great convention between the 15th and 30th of June. By holding such a convention in late June we can have outdoor meetings. All of us that have tents can take them with us, and, if necessary, camp out in the suburbs in order to help out hotel accommodation. Now, to one and all, if you think this suggestion worth while, get behind it with your pen points at once. I am sure the press will help us. Let us send a special invitation to every member of Parliament. Now who will take the lead? There are dozens and dozens of names I would like to suggest, but for the present let us all be leaders.

(The following was written two weeks after the above article appeared.)

Since making the statement that I stood for educational

conservation, my mail has been flooded asking for a full explanation, and, in brief, I will say, that during the last fifteen years I have been lecturing, I have no doubt spoken to a million or more school children in North America, where I emphasize to them and encourage them to build a bird house. If I can get a child to build a bird house he will naturally erect it on a pole and that boy or girl at once becomes a conservationist and, moreover, becomes a better citizen, because of the love kindled in his heart, because he,



Bird houses built by boys of one city after a Jack Miner lecture.

himself, will not kill the bird that is going to build in a house he made, nor will he allow any other person to destroy any bird in his vicinity. This I call educational conservation. But we must not lose sight of the fact that we have got to have laws, and strict laws, for experience and personal observation has taught me to know that kindness without firmness is a total failure and we must have qualified game-wardens to enforce the laws, because there is a small per cent., less than five per cent., who are outlaws, and this small percentage can upset what has been accomplished by the majority of people.

Too many citizens look at conservation as a sportsman's proposition and only a pleasure or hunters' benefit, when the fact of the matter is it is one of Ontario's biggest assets, as between Sudbury and Fort William there are thousands of square miles which have been stripped of its valuable timber and at present is practically only good for its mineral and big game hunting, as well as game fish fishing, in the multitude of small fresh-water lakes and rivers.



Here's the Rose Arbor at the Miner Home.

No state in the United States or province in Canada has such a vast sportsman's paradise and such opportunities knocking at our door, if we will take the wolves out and let the deer increase, not only by the actual money paid out for licenses, but also by the money left in our country by tourists and hunters who can be attracted to our vast northerly playground to hunt and fish when deer are allowed to increase and game fish are planted in our streams and lakes which have all been fished out. Stop and think of

the different places the tourist leaves money: railway fares, gasoline for automobiles, hotel expenses, grocery expenses, taxis, boat fares, rent of cottages, rent of boats. Best and most encouraging of all is the money he leaves, or would leave, with the guides and settlers, the license being a small fee in comparison to above outlay of money spent in our country. I still stand for raising the bounty on wolves and at the same time to raise the hunters' license enough to pay the extra bounty paid and to get the wolves out of the country, allow the deer to increase and thus bring more tourists to our Ontario who will leave that much more money in our Province and Dominion.

We all know that one hundred dollars brought in by tourists has just as much purchasing power as if it were for one hundred dollars' worth of wheat shipped out. Are our fresh-water lakes worth more to us than if the country they cover was a wheat field? Let's get together and educate each other how to make it worth more than a productive wheat field. I was told by one of Wisconsin's government officials that their lakes in Wisconsin and Minnesota were more valuable to their state, that they brought in more money into the state, than that much cleared agricultural land. We all know these states border Ontario. Such being the case, what is the value of our lakes when up to the present time they are free of pollution. Think it over. Don't let us get together to talk laws. Let us get together and do something.

CROWS

MY REASON, dear reader, for writing this article is simply to encourage you to take more interest in our great out-of-doors and a closer study of the so-called wild creatures that occupy it. Yes, and to ask you to study them closer for yourself, since at the present day there are so many indoor naturalists writing and misleading the public. This is why I am asking all classes of humanity to take a deeper interest. When you are driving, walking, running or flying keep both eyes open so as to gain more from personal observation, and when you see a crow pursued and pecked by smaller birds stop and ask yourself why? Why are these song and insectivorous birds putting in their valuable time chasing a dirty, black crow? Surely they don't want to eat him. Then, why are they chasing him?

Or you may see a killdeer or other species of bird fluttering and hobbling out from right near you. Immediately you are convinced that she is crippled in the back or her wing is broken, since she keeps falling over herself every time she attempts to get away. Of course, you are going to catch her and see just what is wrong. But soon you find you can get just so close and no closer and when you have run yourself out of breath you will get discouraged and stop, for you find the bird you are pursuing can fly fairly well and is five times further from you than she was when you started. Now please ask yourself why and go back where you first saw her. But be careful where you put your feet for you might step on her eggs or one of her babies. Keep both eyes open and be convinced as to how these God-given creatures, in the majority of cases, take advantage of color

protection. For illustration: if it is a killdeer's nest, see how she has gathered pebbles, shells, bits of wood or fragments of anything the color of her eggs, and placed them all around her nest. Remember this is the mother's doings. And when you see a baby ruffled grouse (partridge) not over three days' old, hide among leaves the color of itself, what do you call this? I simply call it God.

In the spring of 1879, which was the second year we were in Canada, I put in every Sunday hunting for young foxes, to keep them as pets. With axe in hand, I would scour the woods for miles around and, when I heard something meowing and screaming, which sounded like an old Tom-cat making his last screech, instead of running for home to tell mother I was chased by a lynx or a wild-cat, I quietly pursued this pitiful, squalling sound, taking good care to mark the exact direction it took me. When about one quarter of a mile away, the squalling usually ceased. Now, I turned and, if the noise took me straight north, I went straight back south from where I first heard it, keeping both eyes open for hollow logs and so forth, and for remnants of rabbits, ruffled grouse or turkey feathers. And in the majority of cases I would soon be using the axe to chop out the young foxes.

Some time ago I read a nine-page letter sent to me from a gentleman explaining that "it was not the English sparrow that was driving the barn and eave swallows out, but that the systematic control of house flies by the human race was robbing the swallows of their food and starving them out." Really, it was a beautifully-written letter, and, if one did not know better, he might be induced to believe it. But the fact is, the English sparrow, or imported flying rat, is the direct cause of the decrease of fully ninety-five per cent. of our barn and eave swallows. I hadn't

seen an eave swallow in Ontario for twenty-five or thirty years. In Alaska there are no English sparrows, but in July, 1925, I counted forty-seven occupied eave swallows' nests under the eaves of a building we stayed in while there. In other words, they are there now, just the same as they were here in eastern America fifty years ago, and would be here now were it not for the devilish, dominating ways of this imported, undesirable house sparrow, a dirty bird that doesn't do as much good in a year as a swallow will in a week.

Some years ago, I saw an article in a sporting paper stating that canvas-back ducks and Canada geese migrated at the rate of one hundred and twenty miles per hour. One hundred and twenty miles per hour, or, in other words, two miles per minute! Say, I am from Missouri; you have got to show me! During the last ten years, I have been privileged to give this question a fair test and, on several occasions when the wild geese have left my home for Hudson Bay, I have wired ahead of them. I wired to the C.P.R. agents at Stralak, Ontario, and to the C.N.R. agents at Cochrane, Ontario, and in every case I received a reply. If these agents saw the same geese that left here, these birds were making between forty and sixty miles per hour. Another short but accurate test I have been making recently is as follows: My oldest son lives two miles south of me on a road running east and west, the same as the one I live on. The wild geese that make their home with me at least five months of the year all go out to Lake Erie to roost, returning early the next morning. Lake Erie is three miles south of my home. When I hear them honking and see them towering high before leaving the sanctuary, getting ready to cross over this three miles of no-man's land, I get my son on the telephone. As I say,

he is two miles south of me, between the lake and the sanctuary. He holds the receiver with a watch in his hand and just as a big, distinguishable flock crosses the road at my house I call "Go!" He marks the exact time, goes to the road and, of course, can see the geese coming. Here are results of the last three tests: First, two and three-quarter minutes. Second—with a nice breeze in their favor, lifting them along—two minutes and eleven seconds. Third, as they were facing quite a stiff breeze, four minutes. Remember, these birds are from three to five hundred feet high before they leave the sanctuary, therefore they are not doing much climbing after they leave here.

Oh, but you sigh and say, "What has all of this to do with crows?" Nothing at all. I have only unrolled these experiments to encourage you to study for yourself.

The first hunting I did in Canada was crow hunting. This was in May, 1878. We shot the crows because they pulled up our corn and from boyhood up, whenever I started to hunt any creature, I studied its habits. Soon I found myself practising how to imitate the call of a baby crow in distress, mingled with the hoot of a great horned owl, the creature that was causing the young crow's trouble. I would practise this quivering, cawing and hooting in the early morning, when all was silent, and let the echo from the forest speak for itself as to the perfection of the deception. Then I would conceal myself in the thick undergrowth of the woods, in easy range of a few dead tree-tops for Mr. Crow to perch on. I would then start giving these low, delicate caws of distress, just the same as I had heard the young crows utter, now and then giving the low hoot of the owl. Many, many of these black, old nest-robbers have brought food or come to protect the wrong baby but, to my surprise, they were not feeding their young on corn.

As I held these old birds up by the tail as they gasped their last, they spewed up birds' eggs. I have seen as high as seven unhatched robins pour out of the mouth or throat of a dying crow, and the little bits of life were sometimes still squirming.

Dear reader, the above is only a flash of the cruel, wicked, murderous ways of these black, old nest-robbers. Fortunately, in those days there were not many crows.



It Surely Works! One corner of Jack Miner's Crow Trap after it has been sprung.

Really, I don't believe there were ten per cent. as many then as there are to-day. We must not blame the crows for their increase. This is man's fault. We have gone wrong. We have combined our force with the crow's and pointed all our attention at the game birds. Yes, and song birds, too, and left these organized nest-robbers to multiply by leaps and bounds.

Thirty years ago no crows wintered in Ontario, but now they are with us the whole year around. In travelling

from Windsor to Chatham, Ontario, a distance of less than fifty miles, I firmly believe I have seen over one hundred thousand crows in less than an hour. There is another reason for them multiplying so rapidly the last twenty years. Their worst natural enemy is practically gone—the raven. Forty years ago, ravens were just about as numerous in this country as crows. The raven is nothing but a big, powerful, overgrown crow in his habits, only he doesn't



The Crow Trap from the Side.

migrate. He will search for a crow's nest and rob it of its eggs and young, treating them just the same as the crows treat our robins, mourning doves and dozens of other species of lovely, desirable, song and insectivorous birds. The raven is an inhabitant of the more dense woods, but will scour the clearings for food and, up until the last few years, they fairly thronged in northern Ontario and Quebec.

Between 1895 and 1905, the very height of my sporting ambition was big game. I usually carried four ordinary, two-bushel, twine sacks and when I shot a moose I would

bag the meat up, carry it a few rods and cover it with boughs to make it suspicious-looking to the wolves. Then, I would shoulder the head and go to camp. When the party of us would return the next day to carry out the meat, I have often seen as high as a hundred ravens fly up from around the running gear of one moose. But now, going over the same ground, I haven't seen a single raven for two or three years.

You see, the price of furs started soaring in 1904 and kept right on going up, up, up. Think of it! Mink skins which sold for one dollar each now sell for from fifteen to twenty dollars. Fisher skins that sold for three and a half dollars now bring one hundred. And a great many other furs soared in proportion. The result is that in the last fifteen years the woods have been overrun with trappers and, although against the law, the majority of them used quantities of strychnine and, just as soon as the ice will carry a man about, every lake in our northern country has poison bait or baits upon the ice. Some trappers will shoot deer and moose for no other purpose than to make poison bait of it. By injecting the poison into the meat while warm, I understand, they make the most deadly kind of bait. Putting bait on the lake gives the trapper the great advantage of finding the fox, wolf, fisher, lynx, or whatever animal takes the least bite of it. You might say with so much poison in the woods why didn't this reduce the number of wolves? The fact is that the wolves are very shy, and it is only the few experienced trappers that are able to get wolves to take poisoned bait.

In January, 1905, I was with a professional trapper. On going to his bait on a lake, we saw that a raven had taken a few pecks of the bait, had flown about fifty yards and died. A fox had eaten part of the raven and lay

stretched out within twenty feet of it. There was a fresh fall of snow and, as the fox had come from the direction we were going, I tracked him back for fully one half mile, and I am absolutely certain he did not get any other bait in that distance. Hence it is plain to see how the high price of furs has all but exterminated the raven. In fact, the crow's only enemies, now, are the fox, great horned owl and red-tailed hawks, but these three combined aren't one, two, three, with the raven. I have been asked by a great many people "why didn't this poison kill all the wolves?" In reply to this, let me say, the wolf is the shrewdest animal to poison or trap on earth. So many inexperienced people, carelessly putting out this poison, caused the wolves to be shy of any cold bait they saw, in fact, it is only experienced trappers that know what that means. The most experienced trapper gets them taking bait weeks before they put any poison in it.

Before I go further, I want it distinctly understood that I don't want to kill any bird. This killing desire has apparently all left me. But how can I call myself humane and stand and see these black, highway murderers of the air continually robbing the more desirable birds of their eggs and young, and hear the mother screaming and crying, "Help, help, help!" How can I be humane and hold myself when I know he is coming back to repeat this cold-blooded, murderous deed. Moreover, I know that if one of these insectivorous or song birds were left to mature, it would do more good in ten minutes than a dirty, old crow would do in a day. Think of all the good the descendants of this one insectivorous bird would do had it been allowed to mature and raise young. Oh, but you sigh and say, "Jack Miner, are you sure that you know what you are writing about?" Yes, I am. I have tested it out.

In 1910, I started reforesting near my home, in fact, nearly all around my home. I secured the majority of the trees from the Ontario Forestry Department. The fifth year I had one nesting pair of mourning doves and now the doves nest and roost among these trees so thickly that they are actually breaking the limbs down. During May, June and July, I can take you to at least three hundred occupied doves' nests in that many minutes, and, to-day, I would



A Close-Up of One Corner of the Trap. These crows will eat no more birds' eggs.

far sooner loan you my gun and permit you to go in there and shoot one hundred pairs of doves than to allow one pair of crows to nest there and murder and terrorize this whole bird haven. Remember, here in southern Ontario doves nest from four to five times a year. My intimate friend, Mr. W. E. Saunders, of London, Ontario, located a doves' nest here with young doves as large as sparrows on April 19th. Fully ninety per cent. of them cease nesting by September 1st. Why, bless your life, these doves have

got so bold that last summer there were three pairs nesting at one time on the piles of drain tile at our drain-tile factory adjoining this little sanctuary. And remember, there were from five to eight men working there all summer, piling out and shipping away tile. But one-half mile north of here is a ten-acre wood, equally as inviting for any desirable bird to nest in, but there are no doves there, for the simple reason that there is usually a crow's nest in that vicinity. Remember, these doves are only one variety of desirable birds that nest in here under our protection from the crows, coopers and sharp-shinned hawks. Robins and catbirds are wise to this protected spot. Really, just isn't it lovely to think, yes, to know, that these sweet, lovable creatures are so ready and willing to come to us homely, human beings for protection? Doesn't it take us face to face with God's kind promise: "Let man have dominion over all."

A great deal has been said about the crows' diet, so let me add my testimony. Crows will eat most anything. Yes, and about everything. I have had enough pet crows to find this out. But shelled corn will kill young crows about as quick as any diet you can feed them. If you have a young one and are anxious to raise him, feed custard —one hen's egg to half a cup of milk (no sugar)—and just watch him grow. I have fed them chopped up snakes and they always cawed for more snake. Old crows will even graze like a chicken. During the winter in this section of the country, their chief diet is corn, but if they can find carrion that is what will tickle their palates most.

As to the value of the crow, let me tell you this. A crow will do no more good on the farm than a leghorn chicken that will lay a dollar's worth of eggs a month. And as for the grasshoppers the crow destroys, let me

advise you to keep a flock of turkeys and condense these grasshoppers into fifty cents per pound.

And now to the sportsmen and bird lovers of the continent let me hand this boiled-down sentence: Don't expect our desirable birds of Canada to increase until the crows are decreased. Saying nothing about the game birds they destroy by eating their eggs, I honestly believe, especially in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, that, by eating the duck eggs, the crows are the cause of decrease of ducks more than the hunter and his gun. In Manitoba, crows are so thick I saw them nesting on the telegraph wires. This stark, naked fact is what caused me to study crows so much the last five years. To reduce them by shooting campaigns has been proven a failure. Thousands of men are trying that and, in spite of their many varieties of decoys, the crows are increasing. Here is where my life's study of them helped me out, for I know how shy and cute a little shooting will make them. At last the idea of catching them presented itself to me, and immediately I could see results. More study increased my faith until I simply had to try it out.

Since I knew I would have to have bait, I at once called up Mr. Art Brown, one of our Kingsville fishermen, and he agreed to let me have a truck load or so of fish heads, scales and entrails, providing I got them off the dock before the health officers put him off. Next, I secured a dead horse or so and was about all set for crow bait. Then I built the net on the same principle as I had built my net to catch and tag geese, but much smaller, the exact dimensions being six feet high, twelve feet wide and seventy feet long. I started building the net on a Thursday and finished it Saturday, doing practically all the work myself. And on the following Tuesday I caught 510 crows at one catch.

While there may be dozens of other ways to control crows, yet I do know this method, if put into practise, would soon reduce their numbers to the same proportion as they were fifty years ago.

About the only fault I have heard about my crow net is that it is altogether too expensive. This surely must be a Scotch complaint, for I know two young men that built a crow net last winter and caught as high as 237 at one catch, and the net only cost them seven dollars. Of course, this one was built of junk material, such as poles from the woods and old fish netting, but it caught the crows just the same. To build a neat net as large as mine, and to use new one-inch gas pipe as frame, and new two-inch mesh netting, would cost from seventy-five to a hundred dollars. But it is not necessary to build the net as long as mine. A net twenty-five feet long, instead of seventy feet, would soon catch some crows.

The big thing to make the net successful is the attention given to it. That is, keeping it well baited. We bait for two or three days outside of the net and then, when we have a thousand or two crows coming, we draw the bait under the net. Of course, we never allow any shooting near the net, as that will frighten the birds, and we don't even go near the net or allow any one near it except toward evening, when the crows have gone to roost, at which time we take the bait out. I understand indirectly that some parties have built nets but had little success, which I think was largely caused by failure to bait the crows enough outside of the net to get them coming before the bait was moved under the net. Again, I have made all my big catches mostly during the winter, when snow was on the ground, and all the odd ears of corn in the open fields were covered with snow, and thus the crows went any place for feed. During the last

three winters we have caught thousands of them in this one net and have made as high as two catches in one day. But this happens very seldom, because after they get a fright it takes the ones that are not caught two or three days to get over it. So, usually, after we make a catch, we bait well around outside the net for two or three days.

Any one wanting plans or specifications is welcome to come and see our net and to duplicate it. And, really, if you want our more desirable birds to increase, the crows must be reduced.

An appointment to see the crow trap or even help catch crows here at our sanctuary during January and February may be made by writing.

THE JACK MINER CROW TRAP

Editor's Note—A few months ago, after the publication of so many letters in the papers and two or three articles from Jack Miner on the so-called "crow controversy," there was a demand from various quarters for detail regarding the Miner crow trap. At that time Mr. Miner handed plans and specifications to the United States government, by whom they were placed in the hands of the Biological Survey. This organization drew plans and prepared condensed specifications. These it seemed worth while incorporating here as below:

In preparing the drawing of the crow trap developed by Jack Miner, of Kingsville, Ont., the Biological Survey has made a few slight modifications that in no way affect the mechanical features, but which it is believed will simplify its construction and possibly reduce the cost. The dimensions conform closely to the original trap, which had a total length of 73 to 75 feet, a height of 6 feet, a bottom width of 20 feet, and a top width of 12 feet.

MATERIALS—The materials used in the construction of a trap of this size are 14 heavy posts (about 8 feet long and 6 or 8 inches in diameter); 2 posts about the same size but about 11 feet long; 2 smaller

posts, about 11 feet long; 412 feet of 1½-inch iron pipe with elbows and T-joints; 12 posts about 2 x 2 inches and 7½ feet long; 340 feet of 2-inch-mesh galvanized poultry wire, 6 feet wide; 150 feet of 2-inch-mesh galvanized poultry wire, 1 foot wide; 10 pieces of quarter-inch flat iron, about 1 inch wide and 18 inches long; 10 pieces of quarter-inch flat iron, 1 inch wide and 10 inches long; 10 pieces of half-inch iron rod, about 3 inches long; 12 flat or strap hinges, about 2 inches wide; about 300 feet of heavy galvanized iron wire; a quantity of old lumber to complete the framework of the trap; and the necessary tools for pipe fitting, forging, and carpentry.

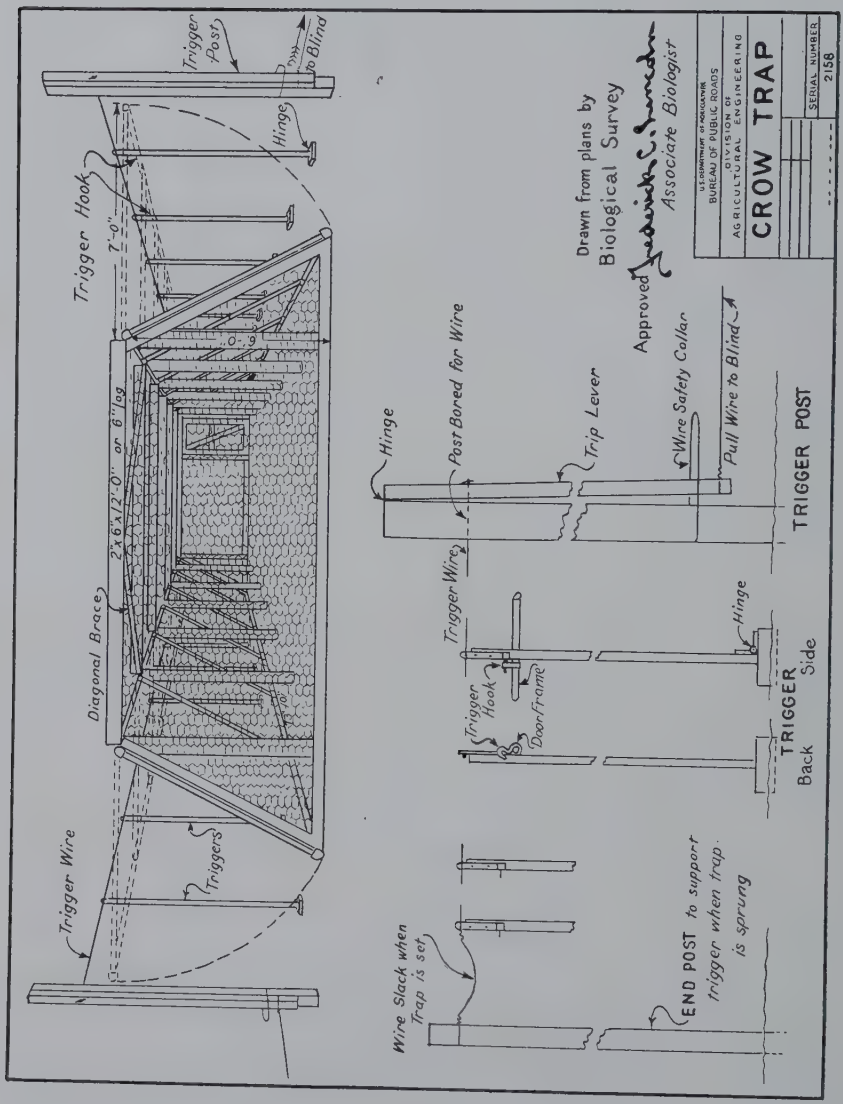
Construction—After the site has been selected, the 14 heavy posts are set in the ground in two parallel lines 12 feet apart, so as to inclose a rectangle about 75 feet long and 12 feet wide. The posts can best be set by the use of a regular post-hole digger and should project 6 feet above ground. The opposite posts in the two lines are then joined together by heavy timbers (12″ x 6″ were used by Mr. Miner), and cross bracing added where necessary. *Note*—The ends of these timbers should not extend entirely across the tops of the posts, but should leave a space about 3 inches, which will be necessary in attaching the doors.

Two pieces of 6-foot wire netting will be used to cover the top. The details of the ends are best left until the doors are in place.

Doors—The doors are merely frames, made from 1½-inch iron pipe, 206 feet being required for each door, which measures 75 feet by 7 feet. Six pieces of pipe are used as cross braces, parallel to the ends. Joints should be made with the usual T, or (at the corners) elbow joints. Having completed the frames, a piece of netting 6 feet long and 1 foot wide are used to cover them, the netting being laced together and to the frame as tightly as possible. The doors may now be set up against the posts, to which they are hinged by the simple expedient of heavy spikes driven into the tops of the posts and bent over the upper pipe of the frame.

With the doors in place, the ends may be completed on board frames nailed to the end posts. They also should be covered with wire netting, and a door should be provided to admit the operator.

Triggers—By pulling each door out and up until horizontal, the place for the line of the triggers can be determined. On each of these lines five blocks are placed at equal distance apart. (Short sections of 4 x 4 timbers set in the ground will do.) These should be set so as to project an inch or two above the ground. To these the triggers are hinged. The triggers are 2 x 2 inch posts, 7½ feet long—(2 x 4 timbers, ripped longitudinally, will make satisfactory triggers), to the top of which are bolted pieces of quarter-inch flat iron, about 18 inches long. These irons must be drilled for screws or bolts before they can be attached and there also should be a quarter-inch hole near one end;


Trigger Post
To Blind
Hinge
Trigger Hook
7'-0"
2"x6"x12'-0" or 6" log
Diagonal Brace
Triggers
Trigger Wire
Wire Slack when Trap is set
END POST to support trigger when trap is sprung
Hinge
Post Bored for Wire
Trip Lever
Wire Safety Collar
Pull Wire to Blind
TRIGGER POST
Trigger Wire
Trigger Hook
Door Frame
Hinge
TRIGGER
Back Side
Drawn from plans by Biological Survey
Approved Associate Biologist
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF PUBLIC ROADS
DIVISION OF AGRICULTURAL ENGINEERING
CROW TRAP
SERIAL NUMBER 2158

the opposite end is forged to a piece of half-inch iron rod so that the latter will project as pins at a right angle about 2 inches. Great strain will come on this iron work, so the pins must be firm. In attaching the irons to the posts, the perforated end should extend several inches beyond the wood and when held vertically the half-inch iron pins should be approximately at the height of the doors when open; i.e., 6 feet from the ground. The triggers are secured to the ground blocks by strap hinges placed on the side toward the blind of the operator.

At the end of the lines of triggers and about 4 feet beyond, posts are set firmly in the ground. The end posts need not be large, but the trigger posts, which carry the operating levers, should be 6 or 8 inches in diameter. Also the end posts need be only a few inches higher than the triggers, but the trigger posts should be 2 or 3 feet higher. At the height of the tops of the triggers a hole is bored through the trigger posts and through each is passed a piece of heavy wire, which connects the triggers by means of the holes in the iron work, where a loop is made, and is finally fastened to the end post. Each wire should be taut from the trigger post to the last trigger, but should have a few inches of slack between the last trigger and the end post. This is to prevent the triggers falling too far forward.

On each trigger post a trip lever (of the same material as the triggers) is attached by hinges across the tops. These levers should extend within about a foot of the ground, and to each is attached the ends of the trigger wire that passes through the trigger post. To prevent the levers from being pulled too far, wire safety collars are attached to the trigger posts a few inches above the lower ends of the levers. These should allow the lower ends of the levers to move about 2 feet. The pull wires are attached to the lower ends of the two levers, and after extending about 50 feet they may be joined together and continued to the blind as a single wire.

Trigger Hooks—At points on the door frames corresponding to the position of the triggers, the trigger hooks are attached. These are made from pieces of quarter-inch flat iron about 1 inch wide, which are forged so that one end may be curled tightly around the pipe of the door frame while the other end is formed into a hook that will rest over the pins on the triggers.

Operation—As will be obvious from their size, the doors are very heavy and will likely require the services of three men to set. The doors are pulled out and up to the horizontal position and the triggers moved so that the hooks on the door frames rest over the trigger pins. It is well to attach the blind end of the pull wire to a short stick (such as a section of broomstick), so that it may be better grasped with both hands. A sharp jerk on this will pull the trip levers from 1 to 2 feet at their lower ends, which will pull the trigger wires in the same

direction, 2 or 3 inches. As these wires are attached to all triggers, the action is simultaneous. The upper ends of the triggers move toward the operator, drawing the pins through the trigger hooks, and allowing the doors to fall.

BAIT—Unquestionably carrion is the bait for crows, and the carcasses of horses, mules, or cattle will be found effective attractions. If these can be obtained fresh, they should be cut up into sections *in* the trap and the pieces distributed through its length. It is well to allow the birds to feed unmolested for several days before attempting to pull the trap. A larger catch is thus assured. For the same reason it is not advisable to try to operate the trap every day. Probably once a week would be about the right interval.

Jack Miner himself notes that posts and poles from the woods may be made use of instead of trimmed lumber as the specifications above suggest, and also that old fish netting might be used to cover the framework in place of the galvanized poultry wire. This, obviously, would cut down the cost considerably.

THE WELL-MEANING BUT THOUGHTLESS PUBLIC

IN GLANCING back over my enjoyable life, which has been far more beautiful than any dream I ever had, I sometimes wonder if there could be another man on earth whose experience has caused him to change his mind more often than mine has—especially the last twenty years. For illustration: I have, on several occasions, walked up to a six-foot fence that surrounded a beautiful home. There I have stood with both hands against the iron bars and looked through at the narrow walks, overhung with a great variety of beautiful flowers, that, together with the lovely foliage of the different shrubs, mingled with the fragrance of roses, have caused me to stop at the gate, only to find it locked, saying, in plain English, "You stay out!" I try to think up some scheme whereby the gate will be unlocked and I will be admitted. But what is the use—I am only Jack Miner, a common brick-maker. I have no money to distinguish myself and never will have. My lot is to stay out, and as I stroll away my thoughts are: "What kind of a man lives there? He surely must be of The-Dog-in-the-Manger type." To-day, I am sorry I ever thought wrong of that man. Experience has taught me. Yes, I know now why the six-foot fence was there, but I did not know then. Reader, let me kindly say to you, "When you stand face to face with what I have described, please don't condemn that man, until you have had at least fifteen years' experience, keeping an open house, home and grounds for 'the well-meaning but thoughtless public.'"

Not long ago I listened to what I considered a beautiful

sermon in our church, but the dear man spilt the beans for me, when he wound up, by weaving in "The House by the Side of the Road." He went on to state how an aged couple lived back in a little glen. At the road entrance was a sign, "Come in," and, as you followed the winding path and crossed a little brook on stepping stones, you suddenly came upon a crystal spring, trickling from a huge rock, that was overhung with small shrubbery and vines.



Interested Folk Flocked to the Miner Sanctuary.

Here was a cup and another sign, "Take a Drink," and as you advanced farther you suddenly came upon a small clearing. Here was their home. Upon the front verandah was a barrel of choice apples and a sign, "Help Yourself." It was a beautiful theme, though I couldn't help but think, as I looked the man in the face: "My dear fellow, if you knew what you were talking about, you would not say the things you are saying."

That night, after we had gone to bed (which was the

first privacy we had all day), my wife asked: "What did you think of this morning's sermon?" Now I try to be big enough not to pick faults. I never heard a sermon that did not give me many good thoughts, but this time I broke my rule and said, "It was all right, except for the wind-up." "The House by the Side of the Road," pictured as he pictured it, was evidently correct, when the country was in the ox-cart stage, and our speed limit was "fourteen miles in



One Penalty of Becoming Famous—the Visitors Kept "Uncle Jack" Busy Checking Them Up.

fifteen hours" and our neighbors were ten miles apart. But to-day, with our double-geared lightning communication, our suicide speed limit, and so many people who apparently have no interest in this world except the twenty-five or fifty-dollar interest they have in an old, second-hand car, I tell you, we are facing a different proposition. Personally, I found out that I am within one hour of nearly two million people, including the city of Detroit. There has often been from fifteen hundred to twenty-five hundred

people here on one Sunday. Now, as for the drinking cup and the barrel of apples this man described: Why bless your life, who would want to be the fifteen-hundredth one to follow the artificial faces of the present day, and put his lips to the germ-corroded, old tin cup? The apples and the sign, "Help yourself?" Why, bless you, to-day Henry would say to Jim, "Hurry, take hold with me, and we will put the whole barrel in our car."

A few odd years ago, as we were coming home from



The Personnel of Conventions Often Came to See the Place.

church, another Ford went by. A voice shouted, "Hello, Jack!" and out of the open side of the car a man was waving a big bunch of darwin tulips. I presume, his way of letting me know that, during my absence, he had honored me by a visit. As soon as I arrived home, and could break away from the many people that were there to greet me, I strolled over to my choice tulip bed. What an aggravating sight it was. For this innocent, ignorant man had plucked the whole side bare. Tulips that I had paid a shilling apiece

for. I cannot think wrong of that man, because he evidently thought tulips came up like grass—a nice new lot of blooms the next day.

Well, that same day, about four-fifteen, we returned from Sunday school. The road in front of the house was a line-up of cars. People were tramping all over our premises and had frightened every bird away. All mudded in around the house were eight or ten old hard-tire, balloon-top cars that didn't appear to have had a bath since the



Visitors' Cars Usurped the Roadway in Front of the Miner Home.

hail storm of 1912. When we got to the door of our home we were greeted with another: "Hello, Jack! Say, Jack, we came right in and made ourselves at home. Jack, I want you to meet my people from Smithville. We've been all over the place, but they wanted to meet you." And we found from twenty to thirty people in our house, strangers we had never seen before nor since. They had used our home, from bathroom to kitchen. Imagine, if you can, what the place was like. They had tramped all over the twenty-five acres of sticky clay and all over our house, smoking and spitting, "waiting for Jack to come home."

Speaking of smoking, really, I can only thank God that I haven't been burned out years ago. I have picked up as many as three smouldering stubs in my barn-yard in one day.

The thoughtless public! I have put up signs around the place to direct people. These have been repeatedly torn down and thrown aside. I have signs, "No Smoking, Please," posted in many places throughout my buildings,



Motorists Came in Droves and Made Themselves at Home.

and yet an aged man, right in my presence, deliberately walked up and struck a match on one of them, and started his pipe agoing. When spoken to, he replied, in the presence of at least twenty-five other men: "I smoke around my own buildings. I'm careful with my fires."

Not so long ago, when we were eating dinner, I heard a horn blowing at our door. As I approached, a gruff voice said, "Who in Blank parked their car right in this drive?" "Pardon me, Mister," I said, "that is my car." "Well,

isn't this public property?" was his reply. I overheard another man say: "He has a right to do this. The government is paying him."

Now, what I have mentioned are only flashes of what I have had to endure on my own property. When you see a fence in front of my place, please don't blame me for it. Dear people, it is the hardest job I ever went at. It is "The Thoughtless Public" that have erected that fence—not Jack Miner. I think that I have done remarkably well in



Visitors on the Miner Baseball Field.

holding out as long as I have, when, in our public parks, saying nothing about a private home, there has to be a man wearing a blue coat and brass buttons to keep the public from carrying off everything but the grizzly bear. I have tried not to speak a cross word to a living person and I know that I have used rich and poor alike. If any have been slighted, I am sure it is the former. But, now, I am going to start over. I am going to add firmness to my list. Experience has taught me three lessons. First—you cannot

do anything for the public, nor have anything for the public unless you control the public. Second—kindness without firmness is a total failure. Third—and this is best



One Thoughtless Visitor Drove Through
"Uncle Jack's" Pet Tulip Bed.

of all—fully ninety per cent. of the people that come here are just lovely.

Now, as for my place being "Government Property" —nothing could be farther from fact. My property belongs to me just the same as yours belongs to you, and the very minute that you come off the road you are my guest.

I want you to realize that, and to know that I am anxious to treat you as a guest.

So many persons have volunteered their advice as to how I can make this a paying proposition, more especially on Sunday. I don't know how many have told me to put up a gas station, a hot-dog, postcard and general souvenir stand. Oh, yes, I could go this suggestion one better. I could have a nice dancing floor, way back among the beautiful growth of evergreens, where all the young people from Dan to Beersheba could gather nights, especially Saturday nights. I could charge them twenty-five cents to get in and the rest they had to get out. I could have a little boot-legging going on in the distance. Just far enough away so I could get the big profit and the other fellow get caught and pay the fine. In fact, I could create a little hell right here on my way to heaven.

"Oh, but," a lady says, "Mr. Miner, I am Mrs. Dr. Golden Slippers." In reply, let me say, "There is nothing here for sale, and Mrs. Dr. Golden Slippers has no more right nor privilege here than Mrs. Hank Overalls." You know, there are a lot of things that money cannot buy and I want to be included. Please let me say to my many friends: "Don't offer tips here. It is wrong education, and so embarrassing to some other fellow who is tipped out and cannot follow suit."

Now, if the people, after looking around the premises, would only leave! But a great percentage of them will stand around our back door. Last summer I saw the members of our household ironing on the back verandah with fifty-three persons looking on and asking questions. This particular bunch stood for over an hour, taking in the sights. The next week our ironing was done in the basement, beside a coal-oil lamp. Ladies, I ask you to put

yourselves in the same embarrassing position. What are the comforts of home, when you are driven into the basement for privacy and have to lock the doors to keep "The Thoughtless Public" out.

Now for this Sunday recreation, or making this a dumping-place on Sunday—let me tell you this. My father bought and paid for this land and in 1878 moved his family here. There was one thing he did not buy, as it was not for



A Familiar Scene in the Old Days when the Sanctuary was Open to the Public.

sale: that is the Christian atmosphere that was established, and although he was not a professing Christian there is this that I do know. He would not have brought his big family here if there had not been that spirit of Christianity established. This Christianity cost somebody something and it is not mine to dispose of, but I am duty bound to hold fast and, by the help of God, I am going to.

So please tell the world there is absolutely no *public* admittance at Jack Miner's on Sunday. As much as I would

like to meet Lloyd George and Calvin Coolidge, I would rather be deprived of the honor than break my Sunday rule and admit them while one hundred people stood out on the road, unable to come in, because it was the Sabbath day.

I am going to build a fence this spring. I am going to move my choicest flowers and plant them beside the road so you won't have to ask permission or get out of your car to see them, and from April 1st (any day except Sunday)



The Miner Place is now adequately fenced—But see how flowers planted along the roadside in front of the home avoid any unsightliness.

to the 20th in the morning, my front gate will be open to the public. Then you can come in, and go up into my "oblookatory" and take a look at the birds. Bring your field glasses with you and you can see the tags on the legs of the wild geese. But remember that the best time to see them is early in the morning—real early—at daylight, if possible.

Yes, I am going to change my plan. While I am going to try and be kind, yet I am going to be as firm as the British lion.



Jack Miner Surrounds Himself with Natural Beauty. This Rose Arbor is at His Back Door.

Now, in closing, dear people, don't think harsh of me for locking the gate. It is not because I want to, but because I have got to. Really, I don't know what I have done to cause it, but the fact is I don't get as much privacy as a side-show ape and even the strength of Jack Dempsey or Gene Tunney couldn't stand this hustle bustle around his home year in and year out. And let me say to the average, country-property owner, if you will take one-half the pride and one-quarter of the expense you have put into your automobile the last eight years and convert it into love and willing hands for home-building for the next eight years you, too, will attract the public from all directions and, with your consent, I will direct my Sunday visitors to you. Now don't forget the time for a visit to Jack Miner's—April the 1st to 20th, to see the birds.

So, tell the world. Don't let your friends come any other time of the year and be disappointed by finding the gate locked. But parties of fifty or more that are interested enough to make special arrangements will be cheerfully admitted at any time during the week, before six p.m., except Sundays. Yes, I am here to do all you could expect any human individual to do. So let us apply the Golden Rule on both sides of the fence, but kindly consider I am only one, while you are millions.

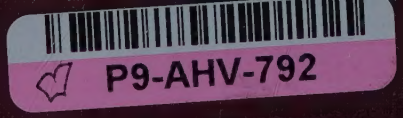
Your friend,

JACK MINER.



JACK MINER
on Current Topics




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